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SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO

The Method of St. Ignatius.

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SHORT MEDITATIONS

FOR

EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR,

ACCORDING

TO THE METHOD OF ST. IGNATIUS.

Revised by a Jesuit Father.

"See that thou make all things according to the pattern which was shown thee."

VOL. I.

JANUARY TO JUNE.

London:

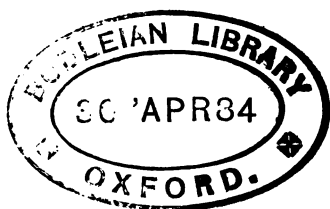
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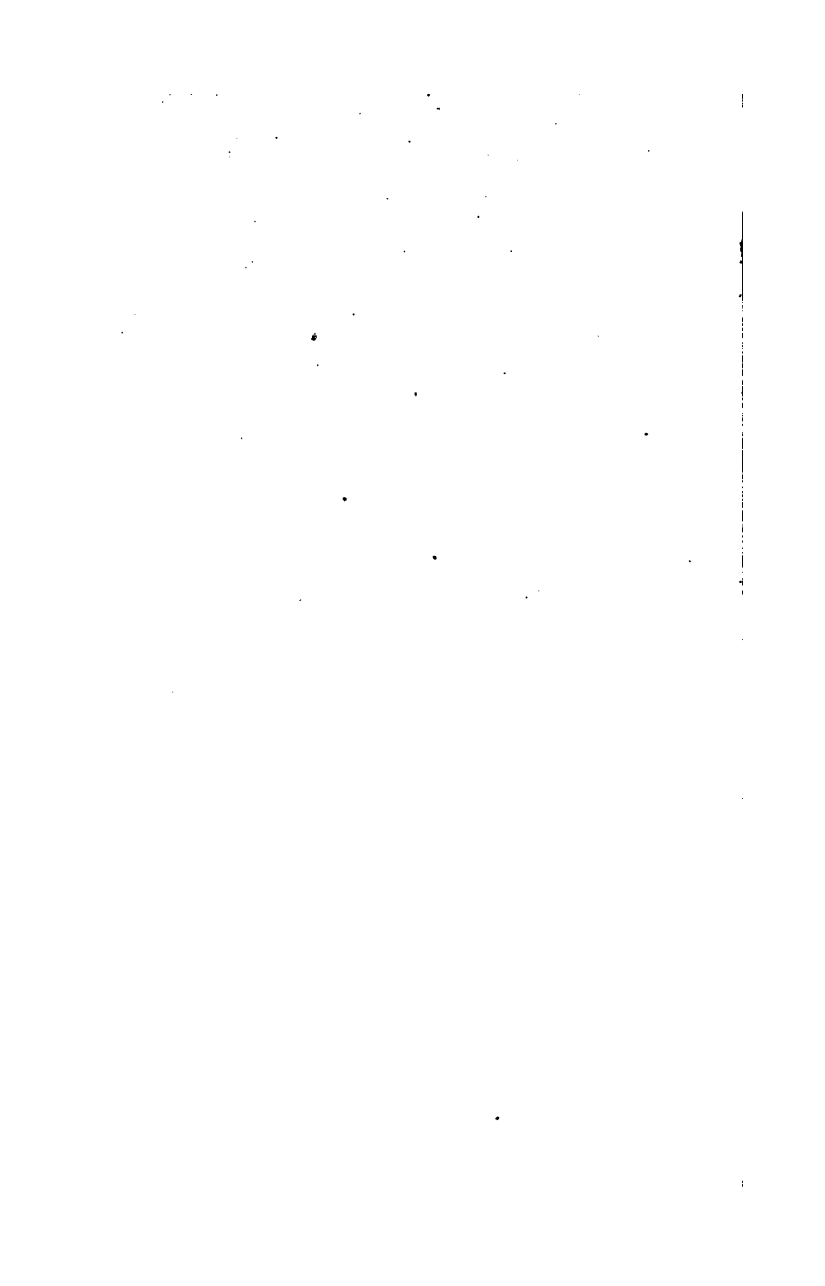
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Die 27 Maii, 1882.



NOTICE.

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These Meditations are almost entirely an abridged translation of "La Vie de N. S. Jésus Christ Méditée," by the author of "Avis Spirituels." Some few of the Meditations are exceptions.

General Index.

For those who wish to follow the order of the Ecclesiastical Year, the annexed table of Meditations will be useful.

VOL. I.

	PAGE
The Circumcision	13
The Epiphany	24
Holy Name of Jesus	50
The Purification	77
Ash Wednesday	103

The Meditations for Lent begin on this day.

When Ash Wednesday shall fall earlier than February 15th, the Meditations in February preceding that date can be used after the Feast of the Sacred Heart. When Ash Wednesday shall fall later than February 15th, the Meditations to supply until the right date is reached commence with

The Well of Samaria ...	364
-------------------------	-----

And continue until

The Vocation of St. Matthew ...	406
---------------------------------	-----

By this means provision has been made for the variation in the date of Easter.

	PAGE
Feast of our Lady of Sorrows ...	179
Palm Sunday	198
Feast of St. Joseph	200
Feast of the Incarnation, or Annuncia- tion of our Lady	201
Easter Sunday	209
Good Shepherd Sunday (Second Sun- day after Easter)	221*
Patronage of St. Joseph	200
Ascension Day	293
Whit Sunday	315
Trinity Sunday... ..	329
Feast of Corpus Christi	336
Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus...	360

VOL. II.

St. Mary Magdalene	49
Feast of St. Ignatius	66
The Transfiguration	81
The Assumption	97
Feast of the Most Pure Heart of Mary	127
Our Lady's Nativity	144
Feast of the Holy Name of Mary	145
Feast of the Seven Dolours	164
Our Lady of Mercy	173
Feast of St. Michael	183

GENERAL INDEX.

xi

	PAGE
Feast of Angel Guardians ...	193
Our Lady's Maternity	204
St. Teresa	216
The Good Shepherd (Second Sunday after Easter)	221
St. Raphael	234
Feast of All Saints	251
All Souls' Day	253
St. Stanislaus Kostka	274
The Presentation	290
Advent Sunday	311
St. Francis Xavier	314
The Immaculate Conception ...	324
Feast of St. Lucy	332
Christmas Day	354

MEDITATIONS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT will be found in vol. i., pages 311 to 327.

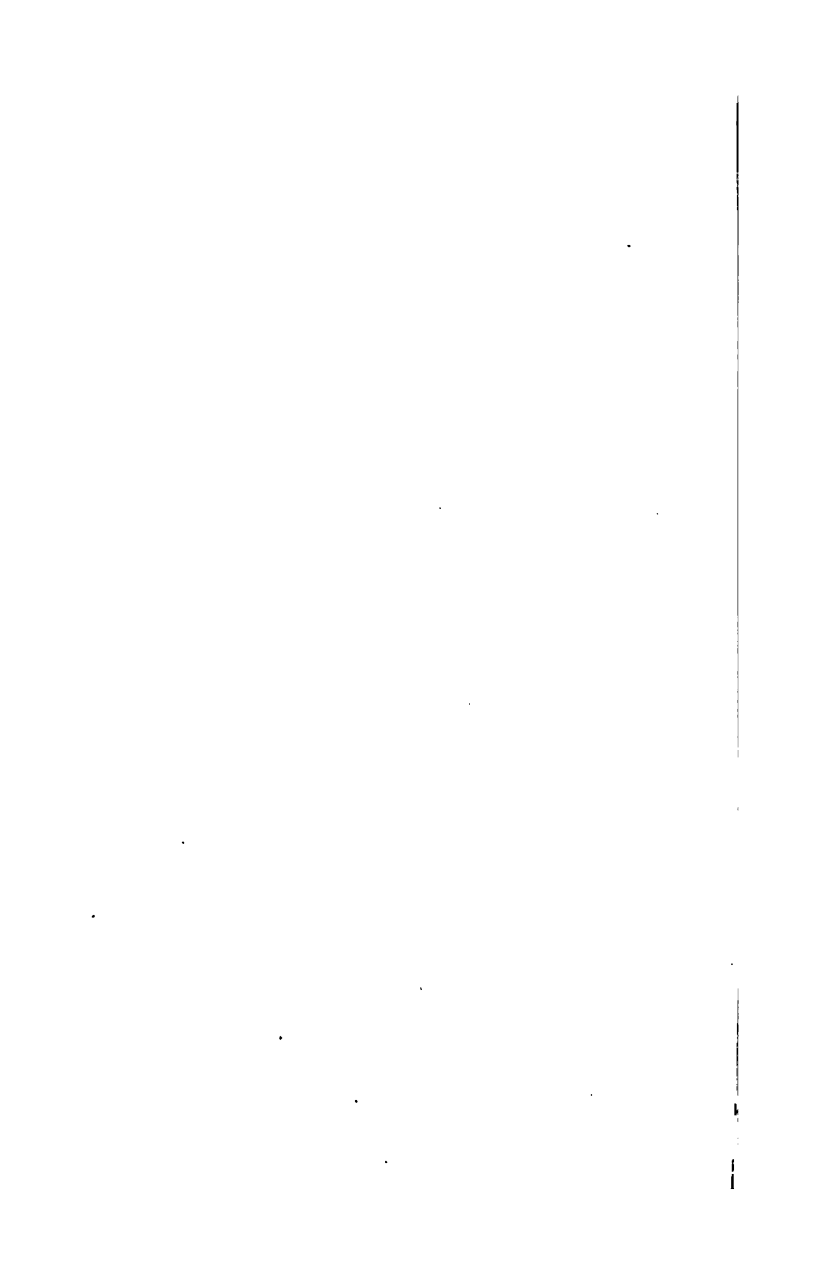
MEDITATIONS ON THE BLESSED EUCHARIST AND THE SACRED HEART will be found in vol. i. pages 334 to 362.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

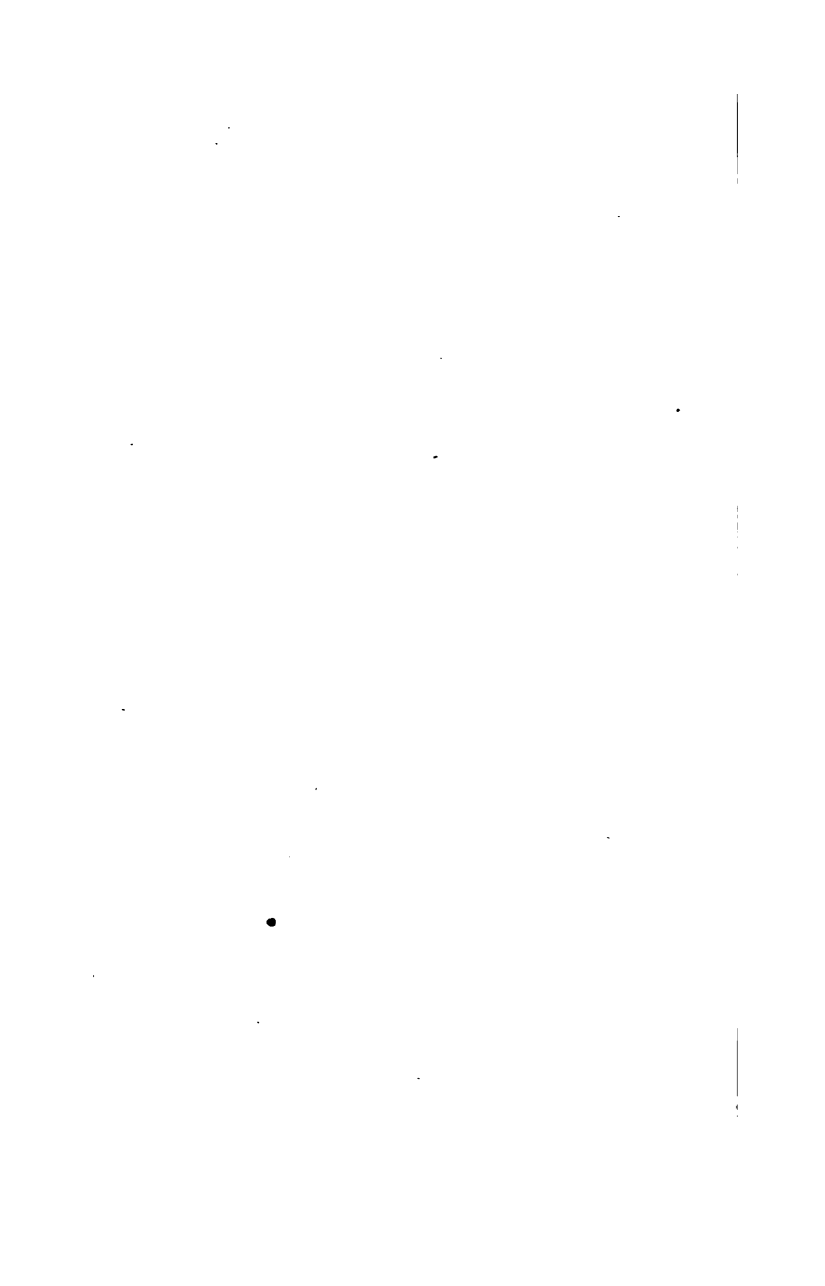
JANUARY.



CONTENTS FOR JANUARY.

—:0:—

DAY		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	5
1.	Feast of the Circumcision	13
2.	The same, continued	16
3.	Jesus our Saviour	18
4.	The same, continued	20
5.	Jesus and Mary at Bethlehem	22
6.	The Vocation of the Wise Men	24
7.	The Wise Men at Jerusalem	26
8.	The Prophecies concerning the Messiah	27
9.	The Wise Men at Bethlehem	29
10.	The Adoration of the Wise Men	31
11.	The Offerings of the Wise Men	33
12.	The Return of the Wise Men	35
13.	How we ought to imitate the Wise Men	36
14.	The Holy Family go up to Jerusalem	39
15.	Our Lady's Purification	41
16.	The Infant Jesus is presented in the Temple	43
17.	Jesus is Redeemed according to the Law	45
18.	Simeon in the Temple	46
19.	The Prophecy of Simeon	48
20.	Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus	50
21.	The Flight into Egypt	52
22.	The Holy Family in Egypt	54
23.	The Persecution of Herod	56
24.	The Return from Egypt	58
25.	The Childhood of Jesus	59
26.	The Loss of the Child Jesus	61
27.	Jesus in the midst of the Doctors	63
28.	The Answer of Jesus to His Mother	65
29.	The Youth of Jesus	67
30.	The same, continued	69
31.	Jesus at Nazareth	71



INTRODUCTION.

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The object of this little book is to supply a want long felt in Religious Communities and Schools, of a meditation book, published at such a price that each of the members may possess their own copy.

To do this, great brevity has been rendered necessary; and in order to economize space the *preludes* of each meditation are not given.

Persons are expected to make their own preludes, according to the method of St. Ignatius.

Ordinarily speaking, the first

prelude is the composition, in the mind's eye, of the place where the event on which we are about to meditate took place. For instance, if we are to meditate on the conversion of St. Mary Magdalene, we imagine we see the supper room where she washed our Lord's feet.

When the subject of the meditation is abstract, such as eternity, faith, and the like, the best prelude is to place ourselves in spirit at the feet of our Lord, etc.

The prelude is intended to help us to realize the meditation.

In the second prelude we ask the grace we want, and again, *ordinarily* speaking, we ask the grace suggested to us by the meditation. For instance, if the subject of our meditation be prayer, we ask the grace to pray well.

The preparation for meditation is

twofold, and consists, first, of the remote, and secondly, of the immediate.

The remote preparation consists (1) in reading over the points of our meditation the evening before the day on which we are to make it; (2) in recalling to the mind the subject before going to sleep, so as to let it be, if possible, the last thought; (3) in doing the same when we awake.

The immediate preparation consists in :

1. Placing ourselves in a special way in the presence of God. St. Ignatius recommends that we stand for the space of an Our Father.

2. In a prayer to ask grace to make the meditation well, and in this prayer to make a little act of self-humiliation, and be sure to invoke our Lady and St. Joseph..

Then follow the preludes and the points of the meditation.

After reading each point we should reflect.

If we find in the first or second point sufficient matter for meditation, we are not obliged to go on further.

From our reflection should spring affections; for instance, a reflection on our Lord's sufferings should bring forth from the heart love and gratitude.

At the end of the meditation we should make a colloquy, that is, converse with God in prayer heart to heart. We give one as a specimen, supposing that our subject has been on the Circumcision of our Lord.

Dear Lord, Thou didst suffer so much for me; give me courage to suffer a little for Thee. I am such

a coward, so afraid of pain; help me, my Jesus. I want to begin this day well, to learn to love Thee more, to serve Thee better. I can do nothing without Thy help and grace. Help me, dear Lord, to overcome that fault . . . which is so hard for me. By Thy grace I resolve this day to be patient with . . . or to obey that order to do . . . which I so much dislike. I will try and recall this thought during the day,—the first tears of Jesus.

In a meditation of half-an-hour the colloquy should not be less than five minutes.

The colloquy should end with a resolution: and this should not be a vague one, such as, "I will try always to be charitable;" but, "I will speak charitably of such-or-such a

person, on such-or-such an occasion," and so on.

Meditation should be followed by reflection, which can be made while sitting or walking about. In it we

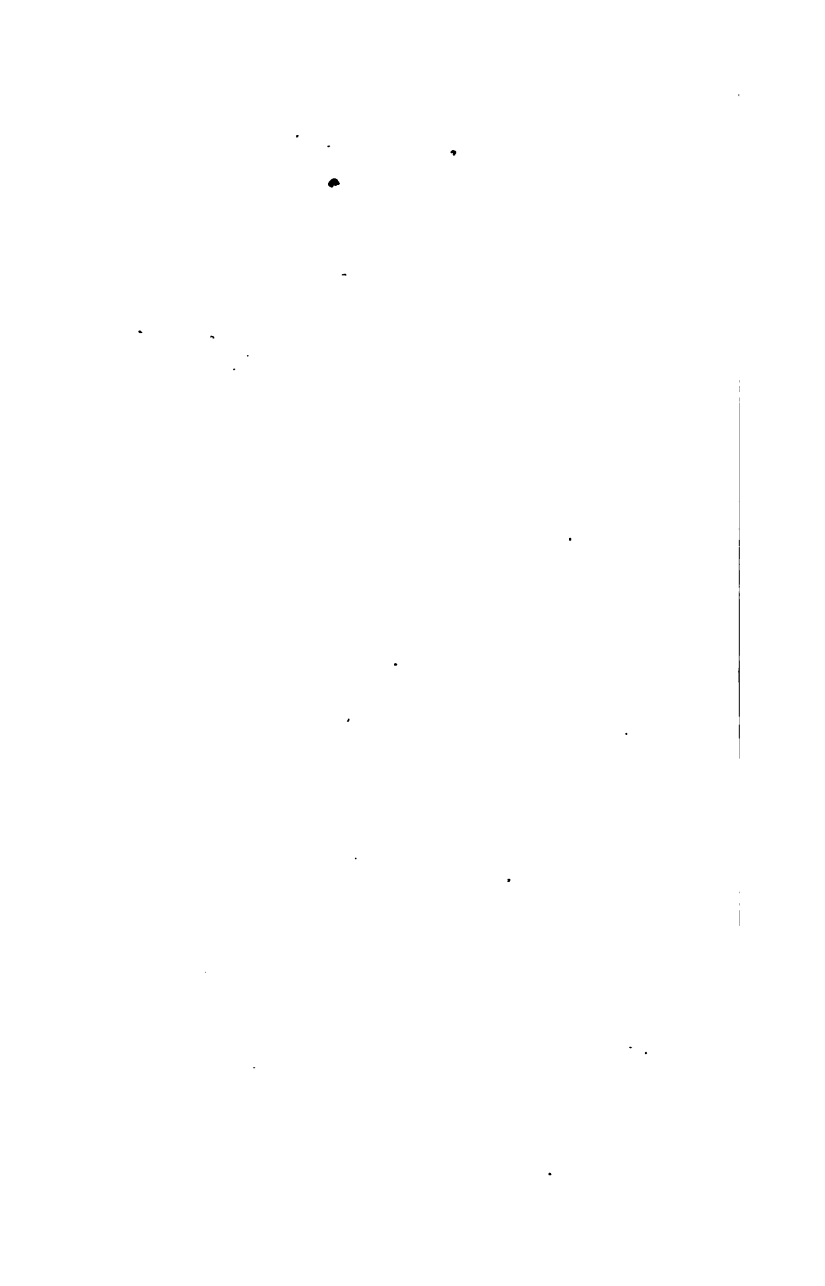
1. Examine whether we have kept the rules which we have just given, and also if we made our preludes, and took pains with the meditation, and made our colloquy and resolution.

2. We try to treasure up some thought which shall help us through the day. The saints call this a spiritual bouquet.

For a meditation of half-an-hour the reflection should not take less than five minutes in addition to the half hour.

The chief object of meditation is to learn to know our Lord, His Blessed Mother, and His Saints

better, and to pray with our own hearts and in our own words, instead of using the thoughts and prayers of others, as we do in vocal prayer. Hence meditation is called *mental* prayer, to distinguish it from vocal prayer.



SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR JANUARY.

JANUARY 1st.

Feast of the Circumcision.

I.

“And after eight days were accomplished that the Child should be circumcised.”

The ceremony of circumcision was painful and humiliating ; but Jesus was ready for all things, that He might become our Saviour.

He offered to His Father the first sheddings of His Blood, already more than was needed for our redemption.

Try to comprehend what His Heart feels for you.

Before He could speak He expressed

that love by suffering ; and to gain you merit, lest His tears should not suffice, He shed tears of Blood.

From the altar the Blood of Jesus is still crying for mercy on you. Offer it to God for the expiation of your sins, and to obtain the graces you need during this year.

II.

“That the Child should be circumcised.”

Our Lady was so submissive to the will of God, that, if need be, she would have circumcised her Child with her own hands.

Her tears mingled with His Precious Blood. She offered both for our salvation.

Be ready, like your Mother, to give up to God what is dearest to you if He asks it.

III.

“Purchased with His own Blood.”

On this New Year's Day Jesus gives you all that He has that is most pre-

cious,—His Blood, His tears, His pain, and the tears of His Mother.

Return thanks, and ask grace to be generous towards Him.

If you cannot give Him back blood for blood, give up for Him at least your self-love and vanity. Renounce yourself, that you may live for Him.

Begin this year as the angels began their eternity, by profound adoration of the Divine Majesty. Begin it as our Lady began her life, by a pure act of divine love and perfect co-operation with grace.

Place yourself in our Lord's hands; unite yourself with His oblation on the altar, so that all through the year, and till your last sigh, you may say, "Behold me ready to do Thy will, O my God."

JANUARY 2nd.

Feast of the Circumcision.—*Continued.*

I.

“Circumcision not made by hands.”

In His circumcision our Lord practised obedience. He was not subject to the law, and He was circumcised as a mark of His submission to the will of His Father.

The true circumcision of the soul consists in accepting suffering and humiliation, for every time we go against nature we have a mark of likeness to Jesus Christ. Any other way of imitating Him is delusion.

II.

“The circumcision is that of the heart.”

In His circumcision our Lord practised humility. He thus declared He had taken the burden of our sins upon Him.

God, who is sanctity itself, appears as a sinner before heaven and earth.

And we, born in sin, and full of blemishes, do not want to be seen as we are; we try to hide our faults, and we do not fear the eyes of God and His angels.

III.

“The observation of the commandments of God.”

In His circumcision our Lord practised mortification.

Was not the cold and hardship of the stable enough? No; He would shed His Blood to show how He loved us.

Ask Him, then, to help you in spiritual circumcision, the cutting off of useless, dangerous thoughts, of words that displease Him, of actions against His holy laws.

Strip yourself of self, and put on Jesus Christ.

JANUARY 3rd.

Jesus our Saviour.

I.

"But now is made manifest by the illumination of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Our Saviour was with us, and as He dwelt amongst us His love seemed but to increase. He came to close hell and open heaven. His blood and His merits are ours. Nothing can befall you that our sweet Saviour cannot heal; and until your death He will be your *Redeemer*.

II.

"Who hath destroyed death, and hath enlightened life."

Has not Jesus been indeed your Saviour?

That beauteous Child caressing His holy Mother with His little hands did one day stretch out His arms on the cross; and was it not your sins that nailed Him there?

Can you think coldly of this? Listen

to the Heart of Jesus asking pardon for you from His Father. In return for His love obey His will.

III.

“Who hath delivered us, and called us by His holy calling.”

Jesus our Saviour came in poverty and humility, that we might follow His steps.

No one was born amidst more privation and contempt than He.

Do not forsake His crib; try to warm Him in your heart. But He cannot rest there if it is not humble, detached from earth, and, like Mary and Joseph, ready for all sacrifices.

Ask Him, then, to cure your pride by His humility.

JANUARY 4th.

Jesus our Saviour.—Continued.

I.

“For He is our peace.”

Jesus our Saviour came to bury our sins in the depths of His mercy. He was mute in His crib, that we might not fear to hear Him reproach us with our sins.

No one can fear a baby; and thus our Lord wanted us to enjoy without any terror His goodness and His tenderness.

II.

“But now in Christ Jesus you, who some time were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.”

Let us go, then, to Him with grateful hearts when He comes down upon the altar with His hands full of graces.

“Receive with love what your only Love has prepared for you,” says St. Francis de Sales.

Jesus comes to purify and sanctify you, and pours true joy into your soul.

Open your soul to that love, and take Him as you would have done from His Mother's arms, and press Him to your heart.

III.

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.”

How patient was our dear Lord in the crib! He complained of nothing. He wept, but not for His privations, but your sins, and because you will not let Him take possession of your soul.

His thoughts are all for the glory of His Father, and that He may heap up merits for you.

Go, then, to this Divine Child with the resolution you ought to offer Him.

JANUARY 5th. .

Jesus and Mary at Bethlehem.

I.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

Our Lady was perfectly submissive to the will of God in seeing her beloved Child suffer, although all His privations were a thousand times worse to her than her own.

She tried to console Him by her love. She pressed Him to her bosom, and then she adored Him as her God.

II.

"Faith that worketh by charity."

And by the manger and in the stable Mary prayed for us. Her love for Him was her joy, her love for us her merit.

Study the details of this life of Mary, the perfect image of that of Jesus; and, like her, make each occupation and suffering an act of love.

III.

“And do ye all things without murmurings and hesitations.”

Imitate this poor, hidden, humble, and suffering life of Mary with Jesus.

Never be discouraged and cast down ; and be ready to be counted as nothing. Persevere patiently in your resolutions.

When your cross seems above your strength, go to Jesus and lay down your burden.

The tabernacle, like the crib, is always open.

Console Jesus for the contempt of others, and He and His Mother will teach you how to become humble and efface yourself.

JANUARY 6th.

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY.

The Vocation of the Wise Men.

I.

“ We have seen His star in the east.”

Many saw this star; perhaps many understood its meaning; but only *three* resolved to seek the King born for the salvation of the world.

Never neglect the inspirations of grace. The graces for your salvation often hang on corresponding with graces of which we make little account.

II.

“ We have seen His star.”

God in His goodness lets the star of His mercy shine on all. These men, who had only known the natural law, were ready at God’s call to practise the evangelical counsels.

Has God ever spoken to your soul in vain?

Humble yourself. Rouse yourself

from apathy. Detest your negligence, delays, and inconstancy in the spiritual life.

III.

“We have seen His star.”

Ignorant where the Messiah was to be born, they ardently sought for Him.

Nothing could stop them, neither the fear of losing their crowns, nor their possessions, nor their families.

You know Jesus Christ. He invites you to close union with Him, and a small difficulty overcomes you, a slight sacrifice makes you murmur.

Resolve, then, to-day to sacrifice to our Lord your own selves and fancies, for fear lest the obedience, the generosity, and the perseverance of the wise men be your condemnation before God.

JANUARY 7th.

The Wise Men at Jerusalem.

I.

“Behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews?”

This journey is the type of the road to Christian perfection.

We see in these eastern kings a lively faith which nothing can overcome, and an intrepid courage; for they knew well enough the danger they were running in Jerusalem. They were single-minded.

But God, by withdrawing the star, obliged them to consult men.

If you walk by the path of obedience you can advance in darkness as well as in light.

II.

“And Herod the king, hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”

It is easy to trouble a soul which has no faith or confidence in God.

Strive to rise above nature. Rejoice that, far from being troubled at our Lord's coming, He is your joy. .

III.

"He was in the world, and the world knew Him not."

Ask God to put an end to this ignorance; for in the tabernacle Jesus is nearly as much unknown as at His birth.

Try and make up to Him for this indifference. Think upon His goodness, how He uses all things for us, even the stars in the heavens.

JANUARY 8th.

The Prophecies concerning the Messiah.

I.

"And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born."

Thus did God's providence bring that

about, which thus caused the prophecies to be published at the time of their fulfilment.

And so will He turn all things to your good if you are obedient to those placed over you.

II.

"But they said to him : In Bethlehem of Juda, for so it is written by the prophet."

Thus the wise men learnt the truth ; for divine light is sure to come to the docile soul.

But fear lest you lose it. Dissipation is like dust, and obscures the intelligence.

These men, who knew the prophecies, did not seek after our Lord. Let nothing separate you from Him.

III.

"Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of the star's appearing to them : and sending them into Bethlehem

said : Go, and search diligently after the Child."

Do you ever misuse the creatures God has given you to lead you to Him ? Do you seek Jesus for natural motives ; for your consolation rather than for His glory ? Ask the grace of being single-minded in His service.

JANUARY 9th.

The Wise Men at Bethlehem.

I.

"And when they had heard the king they went their way."

This journey to Bethlehem typifies the progress of the soul in grace.

The wise men did not linger in beautiful Jerusalem. What can satisfy the soul but Jesus ? On the way to heaven we must not tarry nor look back ; but be ever looking forward in faith and confidence in God.

II.

“And behold, the star which they had seen in the east went before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was.”

Their good God consoled them after trial, as He is wont to do. When a courageous soul makes sacrifices, our Lord makes His yoke easy.

Those who trust in the Lord shall never be confounded.

III.

“And seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”

Their humble fervent faith was about to receive its reward. Jesus Christ is not less hidden in the tabernacle than He was in the cave of Bethlehem. We no longer need a star to show us His dwelling place. Do you “go into His presence with exceeding joy”?

JANUARY 10th.

The Adoration of the Wise Men.

I.

“And going into the house, they found the Child with Mary His Mother.”

From His first coming into this world, our Lord required the wise, and learned, and great, to bend their judgments to the teaching of faith.

The wise men, being humble, found the Child with Mary His Mother. They saw God in a feeble infant.

Seek after Jesus, then, in faith, and by Mary.

II.

“And, falling down, they adored Him.”

The Gospel expressly says, that they adored Him with body and soul.

Fall down in body and soul before Jesus humbled in the Sacred Host, and understand the love that made Him accept that abjection.

III.

“They adored Him.”

Join in the homage that the eastern kings offered in our name to Jesus.

They thanked Him for having come to redeem the world, and for having called them as the first fruits of the Gentiles.

They offered themselves to Him as faithful subjects, to do His will and spread His Gospel.

But how much more have you received than they did! Are you as generous and fervent?

Ask our Lady to obtain for you the grace to make her Divine Son known and loved.

JANUARY 11th.

The Offerings of the Wise Men:

I.

"And opening their treasures."

The wise men brought to the Divine Child all that they considered most precious.

They gave Him gold as king, incense because He was Divine, myrrh because He was man.

What do you bring to Jesus ?

Do you open your heart to Him ? If you renounce yourself you will give Him much.

II.

"They offered Him gifts."

What means you have to make a magnificent present to the Infant Jesus ! If you unite your actions to His they will become pure gold before God.

Offer up your sufferings, your pains of heart and mind.

Jesus is your myrrh : He has suffered

for you so much during His life, and now He suffers in you. Offer Him to His Father as the price of your sufferings.

The prayer of Jesus is your incense, which rises from His Heart towards heaven. Has He not been burnt and consumed like incense by the fire of His love; and does He not wish that the flame should embrace your heart?

III.

“Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

Jesus is all yours in the Holy Sacrifice and the Tabernacle.

You are more rich than you think: but give Him something more, your time. You have nothing more precious to offer, for every moment may win of God a greater glory for you, a happy eternity: never, then, lose a minute.

Kneel with the wise men to receive a blessing from Jesus in His Mother's arms.

How He must have loved them! Their names were written in His Heart. Ask Him to write yours therein.

JANUARY 12th.

The Return of the Wise Men.

I.

“And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.”

What care does God take of those who abandon themselves to Him!

Going back by an unknown way typifies the life of penance.

Determine to have done with tepidity, dissipation, frivolity, and disgust of prayer; and to serve our Lord generously.

II.

“They went back another way into their country.”

They trampled human respect under their feet; and you should do the same when it is an obstacle to your advancement in the service of God.

III.

"They went back another way into their country."

A little while ago the wise men were watching a star. Now an angel speaks to them to direct their steps.

Are you making progress from one communion to another? Are you learning to do His will more and more perfectly?

The sight of the care He takes of those who serve Him should inflame your heart.

JANUARY 13th.

**How we ought to Imitate the Wise
Men.**

I.

"Ask, and you shall receive."

The wise men, at the peril of their lives, came to Jerusalem to ask for our Lord; and their question was answered, they were told where He was.

So if you for His love ask for Him, if you pray and inquire how you can best serve Him, you shall be answered.

II.

“Seek, and you shall find.”

After a long and difficult journey across the desert, the wise men found the Messias.

And if you seek after Jesus you shall find Him.

“My soul longeth and fainteth for the Lord.”

If you are not yet united to Him, is it because you refuse some sacrifice? Are you generous, like the Magi?

III.

“Knock, and it shall be opened to you.”

The wise men had indeed knocked at a door in Bethlehem, and had it not been opened to them by Mary herself?

Happy is the soul which is brought to Jesus by Mary.

You must not only ask and seek f

heaven ; you must knock, that is, labour for it.

“ We ought always to pray, and not to faint,” says our Lord.

Be importunate in knocking at the tabernacle by acts of faith, confidence, humility, love, and good works, and Jesus will open to you, for His Heart opens easily since it has been wounded.

If at any time He seems deaf to your voice, remember how often He has knocked at the door of your heart, and you would not let Him in. There was no entrance there except for creatures.

Ask Him now to reign over you in this life, that when at last you come to knock at the door of His mercy He may open to you the eternal dwelling-place.

JANUARY 14th.

The Holy Family go up to Jerusalem.

I.

“And after the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished.”

Our Lady faithfully observed the law of Moses, and after forty days alone with Jesus in Bethlehem, she went up to Jerusalem.

Nothing is hard, no place is lonely, if we have Jesus.

Take care to keep the laws of God, even in small things, that you may be like your Mother Mary.

II.

“They carried Him to Jerusalem.”

Contemplate Jesus in the arms of Mary, or sometimes in those of St. Joseph.

Could they think of any one else but Him?

Your life is a journey, in which you

should bear Jesus in your heart. Serve and love Him only. What will it profit you at the hour of death to have done many things if they were not for Him ?

III.

“ They carried Him to Jerusalem.”

Imagine with what reverent respect our Lady entered the temple.

Do you thus behave in time of prayer and at holy Mass? Are you “glad to go into the house of the Lord”? Do you realize the presence of that God who reads the depths of your soul, and when you depart does your recollection and meekness show where you have been ?

JANUARY 15th.

Our Lady's Purification.

I.

"As it is written in the law of the Lord, every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord."

Our Lady faithfully went through the ceremonies of her purification.

She would not exempt herself from the smallest observance, and she, who was purity itself, went to be "purified."

She had seen the Incarnate Word submit to circumcision, and she had learnt that our greatest glory here below is humble obedience.

Every day of your life should be that of your purification, for only the pure of heart shall see God.

II.

"And to offer a sacrifice, according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons."

Women who came to the temple after the birth of children remained in the first court.

Mary was a Virgin Mother, but she would not proclaim her glory; she preferred to be humbled with Jesus, who took the form of a sinner.

What an example for you, when you see your Mother lost in a crowd of other women.

Which do you fear the most, to be thought ill of by men, or to be sin-stained before God?

Do you love to hide your good works from others?

III.

“And if she is not able to offer a lamb, she shall take two turtles or two young pigeons.”

Our Lady chose the offering of the poor.

Do you love poverty? Do you practise self-denial and privation in small things?

Nothing is little in God's eyes.
Be generous and faithful to Him who
gives you all.

JANUARY 16th.

The Infant Jesus is Presented in the Temple.

I.

"To present Him to the Lord."

Our Lord in His Presentation renewed the oblation of Himself to appease the justice of God.

He was giving Himself, never to take back the offering.

He was accepting all He foresaw in the future.

Do you ever give to God, and then take back your gift?

II.

"Who gave Himself for us."

Jesus offered Himself in our name to His Father, as recognizing His sove-

reign rights over us, as thanking Him for all the benefits He has bestowed on us, and as a victim to atone for our sins.

In this offering He thought of each of us. Your life was then before Him, and He looked mercifully on it. He accepted the cross for you as for Himself.

Do not, then, refuse the sacrifices of your short life.

III.

“To offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

Jesus was offered by the hands of Mary and Joseph, and God received at last a Victim worthy of His sovereign majesty.

He looked on the earth with love, because we were all within the Heart of His Son.

Look, then, on your heart as a temple consecrated to God.

You have two mites you can offer up to God, your soul and your body. Give them up to God for ever.

JANUARY 17th.

Jesus is Redeemed according to the Law.

I.

“The first-born of thy sons thou shalt redeem.”

God, who had chosen the tribe of Levi for the temple, permitted other tribes to ransom their first-born.

God gave Jesus to the world, that we may know by His own will He redeemed us.

The poorest may possess this Saviour.

How deep should be your spirit of thanksgiving for this great gift.

II.

“For the first-born of men thou shalt take a price.”

And then our Lord was given back to His Mother.

If to possess Jesus we have to suffer, what matter? He is worth all the pains of life a million-fold.

Our Lady took Him back for us.

Do you strive to make Him known to others?

III.

“For five sicles of silver.”

Our Lord was redeemed like other children. He never lost an occasion of practising humility.

How easily and readily He gives Himself to us.

Do you take the trouble to possess Him, to learn the secrets of His Heart?

Humble yourself for losing Him so often.

Take Him again from the hands of Mary, and with Him pay all your debts.

JANUARY 18th.

Simeon in the Temple.

I.

“And behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon.”

He was “just and devout.” He held

sin in horror, and faithfully fulfilled the law. He had grown old in virtue.

Do you avoid the smallest faults? Do you fly from whatever can offend God, or make you unworthy of His presence?

II.

“And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.”

And in this hope the old man had lived. It had sustained him in the struggle to overcome nature, and live in union with God; for, says the Gospel, “the Holy Ghost was in him.”

You have far more than hope. You actually possess Jesus Christ. You live in the full light of His Church.

Are you faithful to these graces?

III.

“And when His parents brought in the Child Jesus, he also took Him into his arms, and blessed God.”

More than had been promised was

given: he touched and embraced his God Incarnate.

God always gives full measure to those who trust Him.

"Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, in peace," said Simeon.

He could lawfully desire death, for he loved Jesus Christ, was detached from creatures, and had given God a long and faithful service.

If you love and serve Jesus, your last hour will be a happy one.

Prepare, then, during life to depart in the peace of Christ.

JANUARY 19th.

The Prophecy of Simeon.

I.

"And His father and mother were wondering at these things which were spoken concerning Him."

It is a joy to hear the praise of those you love.

Is it your joy to hear our Lord praised,

and His dear Mother, and the Saints?
Do you rejoice in whatever brings God
glory?

II.

“And Simeon said to Mary His
Mother: Behold, this Child is for a sign
that shall be contradicted.”

Does the crib of Jesus inspire you
with terror, or with love and confidence?

Those who cannot bear humility,
poverty, and mortification, are in con-
tradiction to Jesus Christ.

Oh, do not let Him be a sign of con-
tradiction in your heart.

III.

“And thy own soul a sword shall
pierce.”

How fleeting is the joy of this world.
No sooner did our Lady see her Child
recognized as the Messiah than this pre-
diction came in all its anguish on her.

From that moment the sword was
hanging over her.

The older her Child grew, the more
she feared to lose Him.

The cross is our only hope here below;
but in all our sorrows and trials let us,
like Mary, bear Jesus in our hearts.

JANUARY 20th.

Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.*

I.

"His name was called Jesus."

Name full of majesty, power, and
might; name adored by the angels,
dreaded by the devils.

Name by which alone we are saved,
for nothing will be refused to us that we
ask in the name of Jesus.

Adore and love that sacred name
with all your strength.

II.

"Which was called by the angel be-
fore He was conceived in the womb."

No one on earth could have chosen

* This Meditation can be transferred to the day on
which this Feast falls.

the name of the Man-God. It was the choice of the Holy Ghost.

Sweet and holy name, telling of the mercy and love with which our Lord has come to save His people. Name by which He promises us eternal life.

In that adorable name place your whole trust.

III.

“That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow.”

The name of our Lord should be treated with great reverence. It is a pious custom always to bow the head when we name it or hear it named, and we should still more render inward reverence.

Strive to glorify that name; make it known to others; show forth your gratitude to Jesus your Saviour.

Fly to Him for refuge in all your difficulties, troubles, and sufferings.

Jesus, Jesus, be to me a Jesus in life and in death.

JANUARY 21st.**The Flight into Egypt.****I.**

“An angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and fly into Egypt.”


God thus tried the faith and submission of Joseph, by commanding him to take a journey full of peril, and go into a heathen land full of dangers.

Are you always submissive to those set over you, believing what they say to be the best for you? Are you anxious to do the will of God?

II.

“Who, rising up, took the Child and His Mother by night.”

This promptitude shows the perfection of St. Joseph's obedience. He did not hesitate or weigh the cost; he took no time to prepare; he relied on no human



means; but went forth into the darkness, blindly trusting in his God.

Do you thus trust the Lord?

III.

“And retired into Egypt.”

Had the Holy Family gone to Arabia the wise men would of course have loaded them with honours and services; but Jesus had chosen poverty and obscurity, and would hide Himself in a heathen land where He would be unknown and despised, and our Lady and St. Joseph had the same thoughts.

Do you seek to avoid notice? Do you fear honours, praise, notice, or do you desire them?

Strive to be like your hidden Lord.

JANUARY 22nd.

The Holy Family in Egypt.

I.

“And He was there until the death of Herod.”

The Holy Family dwelt in this strange land, unknown, despised, gaining their bread by labour. And they were happy and full of divine peace.

For the love of Jesus filled the hearts of Mary and Joseph, and made all trials light; and Jesus ever loved to suffer for us.

II.

“That it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet.”

In the midst of the gross idolatry of the Egyptians what a perfect worship went up to the Most High from the poor little dwelling of Joseph the Jewish carpenter!

What a perfume of virtue amidst the fearful atmosphere of vice!

So should you be ever sending up to your God the worship of a pure faith, and a good odour of virtue, amidst a world full of errors and vices.

III.

“Out of Egypt have I called my Son.”

What a continual prayer and oblation rose up from the Heart of Jesus while He dwelt in Egypt, for that poor land.

In after days the Egyptian deserts were peopled with saints, who, living in solitude, gave great glory to God.

Have, then, great confidence in Jesus, and remember after Holy Communion *He is your prayer*. Your desires then are all-powerful with God. Pray then that the heathen and the heretic may be brought back into the bosom of Holy Church.

JANUARY 23rd.**The Persecution of Herod.****I.**

“Then Herod, perceiving that he was deluded by the wise men, was exceeding angry.”

Ambition brings no happiness, but only disquiet and sin.

Those who live for this world are never satisfied; their schemes constantly meet with opposition; they are always suspecting others, and indulging anger and jealousy.

Never let anger gain the mastery over you and destroy your peace.

II.

“And sending, killed all the men-children that were in Bethlehem and in all the confines thereof, from two years and under.”

To carry out his fell purpose of destroying the Messiah, Herod committed this barbarous crime.

Such are the fruits of human passion uncontrolled.

Humble yourself for your bursts of anger, and for all the harm you have ever done or wished to do to others.

III.

“A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.”

The poor broken-hearted mothers of Bethlehem little thought of the comfort God had prepared for them, that their children were to be first-fruits of the saints, and their memory should be celebrated by the Church till time shall end.

Be courageous, therefore, when those we love have to suffer. Think of their everlasting crown.

JANUARY 24th.

The Return from Egypt.

I.

"Now Herod being dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Rise, and take the Child and His Mother, and go into the land of Israel."

Seven long years had passed. It might seem as if God had forgotten His own. But no; in His good time the message came. The power of man is of short duration, but God liveth for ever.

II.

"Who, rising up, took the Child and His Mother, and came into the land of Israel."

The day will come when you will hear God's angel saying, "Arise, and leave this earth." Will it be the end of your exile? Will death take you to your own country, the Israel of God? If you have been detached from creatures, and

seeking to do the will of God, this will certainly be so.

III.

“And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.”

St. Joseph, not clearly seeing what city he should choose for his dwelling-place, had recourse to prayer, and received the answer.

God does not show us all our way at once; He leads us step by step, to teach us patience, submission, humility.

Strive to attain the disposition of waiting patiently for God.

JANUARY 25th.

The Childhood of Jesus.

I.

“And the Child grew and waxed strong.”

Jesus, the “most beautiful of the sons of men,” grew up in strength and comeliness.

Think of the feelings of our Lady as she watched the growth of her glorious Child, and knew He was the Victim for the sacrifice.

In the little house of Nazareth there were two altars before God; one was the divine Body of Jesus, the other the Heart of His Mother.

II.

“Full of wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him.”

Our Lord allowed the gifts of His all-perfect nature gradually to appear, and He was thus teaching us how, following His example, we may gradually become better. Show forth more and more the fruit of His example and His sacraments.

III.

“Grow up in Him who is the Head.”

As we advance in years, so also ought we to advance in the love of Jesus.

To grow in Him we must follow His road.

“They shall go from virtue to virtue.”

Ask, then, the grace to grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

JANUARY 26th.

The Loss of the Child Jesus.

I.

“And His parents went every year to Jerusalem at the solemn day of the pasch. And when He was twelve years old they went up to Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast.”

No fear kept back the Holy Family from fulfilling the law of God.

How do you stand as regards your spiritual duties, and especially those made in common?

Are you diligent, punctual, reverent? Do you excuse yourself without real need?

II.

“And after they had fulfilled the days.”

Mary and Joseph remained for the whole seven days: they would not offer part of a sacrifice; they gave God all.

“The Child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and His parents knew it not.”

Our Lord had now to teach us a great and painful lesson. He spared not the Hearts of His Mother and St. Joseph to do this, and by giving them sorrow He pierced His own tender Heart.

At God's call we must be ready to leave parents, home, and all, and sacrifice to Him the dearest affections of our hearts.

III.

“And thinking that He was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.”

Contemplate the anguish of your Mother. She had lost her all, but she was calm and submissive. She thought herself unworthy to possess Jesus, yet earnestly she sought for Him.

And when you seem to have lost our Lord how do you act? Do you seek for

Him earnestly, or give way to faint-hearted discouragement?

Ask of our Jesus the grace never to be separated from Him.

JANUARY 27th.

Jesus in the midst of the Doctors.

I.

“And not finding Him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking Him.”

Long and weary was the search. What terrors must have filled the minds of Mary and Joseph, knowing how in His infancy the Child's life had been sought.

Sometimes God calls on us to separate ourselves from our beloved ones for the greater part of this our short life. But we shall meet at last.

II.

“And it came to pass that after three days they found Him in the temple,

sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions."

And thus their long anxiety was rewarded by the joy of seeing Him for the first time teaching His people, letting a glimpse of His divine wisdom shine forth through the veil of His meek childhood.

And those who give up their dear ones to God's service will one day find them again shining with a special glory, "numbered among the children of God, and their lot among the saints."

III.

"And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers."

We may learn this lesson: that recollection, prayer, and retirement is the best school in which to learn wisdom; and again, that when God calls on us to come forward in His service we must do it with simplicity, relying wholly and solely on Him.

Ask for the grace of self-contempt, and trust in God.

JANUARY 28th.**The Answer of Jesus to His Mother.****I.**

“And seeing Him, they wondered. And His Mother said to Him: Son, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.”

Our humble Mother puts St. Joseph's grief before her own, and her words show us how completely and fully the tie of child and mother existed between herself and Jesus. She knew there must be some great mystery to be learnt from His disappearance.

II.

“And He said to them: How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about the things that are My Father's?”

Here is the great example of constancy in our vocation, and the great lesson

that we are sent on earth only to do our Father's business, not to please ourselves.

Is not heaven worth more than earth?
your soul than your body? eternity
than time?

III.

"And they understood not the word that He spoke unto them."

Believe with humility the mysteries of faith that you cannot understand.

Our path here is often obscure. We do not know *why* God sends this grief, takes away that help. His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts.

But if all were plain and clear, where would there be room for faith, for trust?

Ask for invincible confidence in God.

JANUARY 29th.**The Youth of Jesus.****I.**

“And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth.”

And now began what we may call in a special way the hidden life of Jesus.

See Him then at His daily labour, lighting the fire, drawing the water, sweeping the house; nothing was too mean, too little for Him.

And can you, a worm of earth, a sinner, despise these occupations which our God has for ever glorified?

II.

“And was subject to them.”

His humility was not only outward: He was humble of heart; He preferred the will of others to His own.

He saw God in His Mother and foster-father: their will was His. And here is the lesson for us,—to despise our own will and our own judgment; to fear to

have our own way; to fear to be allowed to carry out our blind plans; but to obey, to submit always to those who represent God to us.

III.

“And His Mother kept all these words in her Heart.”

How many details of the life of Nazareth our Lady could have revealed. But she was so wrapped up, as it were, in His humility that she did not, so she only told these few words, “He was subject.”

All was summed up in that. Obedience is the test and the touchstone of true humility. Such is the teaching of Jesus.

Pray that you may understand it.

JANUARY 30th.

The Youth of Jesus.—*Continued.*

I.

“And Jesus increased in wisdom.”

He chose to pass through the stages of our mortal life, and to grow, in the eyes of men, from the child to the youth, from the youth to manhood.

What grace and light can you not obtain by pondering over this hidden life.

How seldom He spoke, and when He did, His words were ever gentle.

II.

“And in age.”

Our Lord was unknown to men. He was to them the carpenter's son. They employed Him, paid Him for His work, oftentimes chided Him.

Is our Lord unknown to you? Do you live His life, act by His inspirations, study His actions, or do you follow your own ideas and those of the world?

III.

“And grace with God and men.”

Our dear Lord had on earth a few true and loving friends; a few chosen souls knew, even at Nazareth, a little about His noble, perfect Heart.

And to a chosen few Jesus is made known in His tabernacle: there, more hidden, more humbled, more silent than at Nazareth, He yet makes Himself known.

Are you among that happy number, the adorers, the friends, the servants of Jesus in the Eucharist?

Oh, be faithful in that dear and precious service.

JANUARY 31st.

Jesus at Nazareth.

I.

“Is not this the carpenter?”

Our Lord worked for His daily bread;
He handled the plane and the saw, cut
out the rough wood, and gained in the
sweat of His brow His sustenance.

Perhaps He chose the trade of carpenter because the wood and the nails spoke to Him of the death He was going to die for us.

Do you labour hard, like your Lord did? Do you look on *hard work* as a holy and blessed means of imitating Jesus?

II.

“Is not this the carpenter’s son?”

When St. Joseph grew old, and unable to labour, our Lord supported him who had provided for His wants in childhood.

Do you labour for others? Do you

respect the old ? Are you full of gratitude to those who have supplied your bodily or spiritual wants ?

III.

“Is not His Mother called Mary ?”

His name was ever linked with hers, and she is ever to help Him in His work for souls.

What work has He yet to do in you ? Has He anything to cut away ? Has He salutary lessons and blessed virtues to fasten in your soul by the sharp nails of suffering ?

Oh, do not shrink from the touch of His Divine Hands.

Yield up yourself to Jesus and Mary, and let them fashion you into a saint.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

FEBRUARY.

To meet the difficulty of the variation of Easter the following plan has been adopted :

Ash Wednesday is fixed for February 15th. The Meditations for February up to that date, and after Easter, will be such as can be used in February when Easter happens to fall late.

CONTENTS FOR FEBRUARY.

—:O:—

DAY	PAGE
1. The Forerunner of our Lord ...	75
2. Feast of our Lady's Purification ...	77
3. The Preaching of St. John Baptist ...	79
4. Baptism of our Lord ...	81
5. Our Lord in the Desert ...	83
6. Our Lord's Temptations ...	84
7. The Jews question St. John the Baptist	87
8. St. John and his disciples...	89
9. Vocation of the Apostles ...	91
10. The Marriage in Cana of Galilee ...	93
11. The same, continued ...	95
12. Our Lord parts from His Blessed Mother	97
13. Our Lord and Nicodemus ...	99
14. The same, continued ...	101
15. On Death—Ash Wednesday ...	103
16. Our Lord washes His Disciples' Feet	104
17. The Last Supper ...	107
18. Our Lord speaks of Judas...	108
19. The Treason of Judas...	110
20. The Contention among the Apostles	112
21. St. Peter's Presumption ...	114
22. Gethsemane ...	116
23. The Interior Sufferings of our Lord ...	118
24. The Prayer of our Lord in the Garden	120
25. The Angel of the Agony ...	122
26. The Sleep of the Apostles ..	124
27. The Kiss of Judas ...	126
28. The Apprehension of our Lord ...	128
29. St. Peter and Malchus ...	130

SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

FEBRUARY 1st.

The Forerunner of our Lord.

I.

“Behold, I send My angel before Thy face.”

It pleased God to heap up His gifts on St. John the Baptist. “Among those who are born of women, there is not a greater prophet.” He was of the priestly line, the near relation of our Lord, and of high sanctity.

By the Incarnation you are made partaker of the divine nature.

Do you, as did St. John Baptist, correspond with your graces?

II.

“And was in the desert.”

Though in a mortal body, he lived an angelic life. He practised the severest austerities, and yet he had no sins for which to do penance, for he “was filled with the Holy Ghost” even before his birth.

And you, who have sinned so much, have you the spirit of penance and expiation?

III.

“Who shall prepare Thy way before Thee.”

Here is the explanation of St. John’s austere life of solitude. He had a great work before him, and he prepared himself for it.

If you wish to be united to Jesus Christ you must tread the path of mortification and detachment. There is no other way.

“They that are in costly apparel, and

live delicately, are in the houses of kings."

If you love the good things of life, and cling to them, you can never do much for God's glory; you will never "prepare the way of the Lord."

FEBRUARY 2nd.

Feast of our Lady's Purification.

I.

"I will worship towards Thy holy temple."

With what loving fervour, and with what a generous heart, did our Lady go up to the temple. How glad she was to be able, by this act of humility, to worship God.

When circumstances bring you a humiliation, are you glad? Do you seek to avoid it, or do you rather welcome it? Do you adore and worship the God who permits this, as He does all things?

II.

"There is offered in My name a clean oblation."

Our Lady united herself with the perfect sacrifice that Jesus made of Himself when He was presented in the temple. She offered herself as a victim, with Him, by Him, and through Him.

No one is so near to Jesus as they who offer themselves up to Him and for Him.

III.

"Thou shalt multiply strength in my soul."

Our Lady was by nature only a young feeble girl; but by grace how mighty was her courage, how deep her self-abnegation. Behold her offering up her only Child, her well-beloved.

Go with her in spirit when, day by day, you behold Him lying on the altar. Go with a heart filled with reverence and joy, and offer yourself in union with His sacrifice.

FEBRUARY 3rd.

The Preaching of St. John Baptist.

I.

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.”

At length St. John came forth from the desert, and on the banks of the Jordan preached the baptism of penance for the remission of sins, thus to prepare the souls of men for the Gospel teaching.

Do you try to prepare your soul for union with God by contrition and penance?

II.

“Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

What an example of penance was St. John himself!

If we wish to gain the souls of sinners we must live lives of mortification and penance. Do you think that every day you live you are preparing your eternity?

III.

“And the people asked him, saying: What then shall we do? And he answering, said to them: He that hath two coats let him give to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do in like manner.”

God gives us many means of sanctification; one way of doing penance is by charity,—giving temporal or spiritual alms.

Are you diligent in these according to your power, living, not for yourself, but for God?

Act towards others as Jesus Christ has acted towards you.

FEBRUARY 4th.

Baptism of our Lord.

I.

“Then cometh Jesus unto John to be baptized by him. But John stayed Him, saying: I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me?”

St. John trembled at the thought of baptizing his Divine Master.

The soul that knows itself, and knows God, is ever humble, is ever lying prostrate before the Divine Majesty.

Seek after that self-knowledge that brings humility.

II.

“And Jesus, answering, said: Then suffer it to be so now; for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. Then he suffered Him.”

St. John could not understand why our Lord chose to be baptized; he obeyed blindly.

The humble soul readily gives up its

own judgment, and God rewards such with special graces.

III.

“And lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him.”

The Holy Ghost came down visibly on our Lord, to show what baptism does in our souls. He came as a dove, to show how meek and gentle a true Christian should be.

“Hear ye Him.”

These words are addressed to you. Are you listening to our Lord, and do you obey His voice?

FEBRUARY 5th.

Our Lord in the Desert.

I.

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert.”

Our Lord fled from the admiration which would have followed the wonders wrought at His baptism, and went into the desert.

Do you fly from the praise of men, and hide yourself with Jesus? The Holy Spirit is your guide. Do you let Him lead you as He chooses, or do you resist His inspirations?

II.

“And He did eat nothing in those days.”

By this long fast our Lord made expiation for all our self-indulgence in food. He showed us how the body can be made subject to the soul.

Are you faithful in self-denial? Do

you offer your body to God as a "living sacrifice" ?

III.

"He was with beasts."

Our Lord exiled Himself from the society of men because you were exiled from heaven. He lived among the beasts to deliver you from the slavery of your nature.

He wants to reign over your passions, which are often like wild beasts.

Let Him, then, conquer your proud, impatient, sensual nature, and raise you up to heavenly things.

FEBRUARY 6th.

Our Lord's Temptations.

I.

"And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards hungry. And the tempter coming, said to Him: If Thou be the Son of God,

command that these stones be made bread."

The devil makes use of the state of our bodies and occupations as snares by which to tempt us. He examines our dispositions, and flatters our passions. He tempts the naturally desponding to despair, and the independent to presumption.

Never change a resolution in time of temptation. Fear the devil, because he is sharp and cunning, and can take us by surprise; but despise him also, because he can do nothing without our consent. Mortify your senses, for by these doors he enters in.

II.

"The devil took Him up into a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said unto Him: All these will I give, if, falling down, Thou wilt adore me."

The devil tries to tempt us by that to which we are most inclined. He tells the slothful to take care of their health;

he pushes on the impulsive to undertake labours beyond their strength.

“Then Jesus saith to him: Begone, Satan, for it is written: The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.”

Prayer and obedience are two weapons by which we can always conquer.

Our Lord won the victory for us. If only we will obey His voice then the devil will depart from us.

III.

“Then the devil left Him, and behold angels came and ministered to Him.”

Temptation is a passing thing, and never unconquerable; for “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able.”

We must go through temptations.

“The devil departed from Him for a time.”

Do not fear Satan over-much, for he is very contemptible. He has no real power, but only blusters. Angels are ready to help you, and the darts of the evil one fall harmlessly on those who are

hidden in the Heart of Jesus. Only those who lean on themselves will ever be overcome.

FEBRUARY 7th.

The Jews question St. John the Baptist.

I.

“The Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and levites to him, to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed: I am not the Christ. Art thou Elias? I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.”

How wonderful was the humility of St. John. He would have none of these grand titles.

“They said therefore: Who art thou? He said: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.”

Only the distant echo of the Divine Word; “a voice.”

What do you say and think of your-

self? Do you desire to be thought well of, and the most made of your good qualities, while your faults are concealed? Are you anxious to be known only as you are before God?

II.

“I baptize with water, but there hath stood one in the midst of you whom you know not.”

St. John did not care to speak of himself, but only of his Master.

“The same is He that shall come after me, who is preferred before me.”

Is it thus with you? Is His glory, are His interests, the first thought of your heart? Are you ready and willing to efface yourself, if need be, to exalt His name the more?

III.

“The latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose.”

St. John did not fear humiliations, neither did any of the saints. It is only the proud and those who love their pride that do so.

Are you really humbled at the feet of Jesus? Do you indeed feel you are not worthy to dwell in His presence, to receive His graces? Are you content to dwell in darkness if He so will it, and to bear every cross, if only you may be an "abject in the house of your God"?

FEBRUARY 8th.

St. John and his Disciples.

I.

"The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world."

St. John thus pointed out our Lord as the innocent Victim for the sins of men, and showed likewise with what obedience, gentleness, and patience He would offer Himself for us.

How often do these words sound in your ears, "Behold the Lamb of God"?

Do you then adore Him, and unite your sacrifice to His ?

II.

“I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him.”

St. John had seen the Holy Ghost descend on our Lord.

That Holy Spirit came into your soul at your baptism. Can any one bear witness that He dwells still within you, and that you have never driven Him out? Does your conduct prove you are indeed the disciple of the Lamb of God, meek and humble of heart?

III.

“The next day again John stood, and two of his disciples, and beholding Jesus walking, he said: Behold the Lamb of God.”

St. John had but one thought, but one love in his heart,—his Master. The sight of Jesus made his soul leap with joy.

Is it so with you when you behold

that Divine Lamb raised up in the hands of His priests, or adore Him in the tabernacle? Is He your justification, your nourishment, your consolation?

FEBRUARY 9th.

Vocation of the Apostles.

I.

“Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, findeth first his brother Simon, and saith to him: We have found the Messias. And he brought him to Jesus.”

St. Andrew could not rest until he had told the brother whom he loved of the treasure he had found.

We should never delay anything which can bring glory to God or good to others, and with all our hearts we should strive to bring souls to Jesus.

II.

“And Jesus, looking upon him, said: Thou art Simon, the Son of Jona: thou

shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter."

What was the effect on St. Peter of the gaze of those divine eyes, of the sight of that ever-blessed face? To fire his heart with love. Henceforward, whatever were his faults, Simon Peter loved his Master passionately.

And has He not looked on you? What effect has it wrought in your soul? Think often of the time when you shall see Him face to face.

III.

"And going on from thence He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and He called them."

Poor hardworking men were those whom Jesus chose. At the sound of His voice they left their nets, their parent, and all they had. They asked no question about the future. They put their whole trust in Him.

Do you trust His loving providence? Do you obey the call of His grace? It

is the Heart of Jesus which guides His Hand, and whether that Hand strikes or caresses, either is the mark of His love.

Be therefore docile to your Divine Master.

FEBRUARY 10th.

The Marriage in Cana of Galilee.

I.

“There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the Mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the marriage.”

Contemplate the persons at this marriage feast. Our dear Lord, disdaining not to share in the innocent joy of His servants; our Lady, so sweet and gentle that all trusted in her, and were not ashamed to make known their wants to her; the guests, full of innocent joy; the spouses, troubled at the failure of wine.

II.

"The Mother of Jesus saith to Him :
They have no wine."

How gentle are these words, full of simplicity, and breathing that perfect trust in the charity of the tender Heart she knew so well; and when He answers her, "Woman, what is it to Me and to thee? My hour is not yet come," she is not dismayed, she understands Him too well.

III.

"His Mother said to the waiters :
Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye."

Our Lady knew she would never be refused. Calm, patient, humble, she waited for Him to act as He chose.

Do you pray calmly, with full trust in God? Do you wait patiently for the answer, and are you contented it should come in God's own way?

FEBRUARY 11th.

The Marriage in Cana of Galilee.—*Continued.*

I.

“Now there were set there six water-pots of stone. Jesus saith to them: Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.”

And at the bidding of Mary our Lord worked His first miracle.

Then if her prayer comes before Him now, can it not work a miracle, and change this cold heart of mine into a fervent, generous one?

See how our Lord constantly exacts blind obedience from His servants.

They had to fill the water-pots without divining the reason for the order.

II.

“And Jesus saith to them: Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it.”

With what loving care must those servants have carried this marvellous wine.

Do you obey the voice of God that bids you do good to others? Do you carry the light of faith to souls?

III.

“And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters knew who had drawn the water; the chief steward calleth the bridegroom, and saith to him: Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drank, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.”

How many of us do not know the tenderness with which this Divine Heart is watching over us, and loading us with blessings!

And He will ever to His servants give the “good wine” last. He will never disappoint us if we never disappoint Him; but one day, if we are only faithful, we shall drink new wine with Him, in the kingdom of our Father.

FEBRUARY 12th.**Our Lord parts from His Blessed
Mother.****I.**

“After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His Mother, and His brethren, and His disciples, and they remained there not many days.”

The time had now come for our Lord to enter upon His apostolic life, and to end that sweet, daily intercourse with His Mother, which they had enjoyed with but one interruption for thirty years.

And by this separation He won for us the grace to part from those we love, when He calls us.

II.

“And He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up.”

The time that He chose for parting from His Blessed Mother was when she was left desolate by the death of St. Joseph.

Never did she seem more to need His aid. But He left her to the care of others. And so we often have to leave our dear ones in faith. Did those who cared for Mary love her more than Jesus did? Do we love our relations and friends more than He who created them and died for them?

Can He not take care of them without our help?

III.

"I must be about My Father's business."

These words had been kept by our Lady in her Heart. She knew the time would come when she would be parted from Him, and she was ready. Her deep love for Him was all unselfish. She wanted Him to be known by all men and loved by all hearts.

Are you unselfish in your piety? Do you consider the interests of others as well as your own?

Strive to learn this beautiful virtue from the Heart of your Mother.

FEBRUARY 13th.

Our Lord and Nicodemus.

I.

“And there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to Him: Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles which Thou doest unless God was with him.”

Notwithstanding the faith of this man, and his earnestness, he could not rise above human respect.

Hold, then, that passion in great horror. Strive after courage in God's service.

II.

“Jesus answered and said to him: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Our Lord was now teaching us that baptism is the gate to eternal life.

Do you think enough of the grace given you by baptism, and of its responsibilities, that you are not your own, but God's? Do you stir up that grace within you?

III.

"Nicodemus saith to Him: How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?"

How often we think that what God wants of us is impossible. We are ready to argue with our Divine Teacher, as if He who has created us, and who is the Eternal Wisdom, did not know us far better than we know ourselves, did not always remember that we are dust.

Never will He ask from you anything beyond your strength.

FEBRUARY 14th.

Our Lord and Nicodemus.—Continued.

I.

“Jesus answered: Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.”

Our Lord teaches us that we must, by the help of His grace, first infused into us in holy baptism, live spiritual lives; and to help us we have the other holy sacraments of the Church.

But we cannot enjoy the good things of this world, and live an earthly life, if we wish for a happy eternity.

II.

“Nicodemus answered and said to Him: How can these things be done? Jesus answered and said to him: Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?”

Nicodemus thought he knew a great

deal about spiritual things, and yet he found he was very ignorant.

Are you ever conceited about your spiritual knowledge? Are you fond of relying on your own judgment? Are you ready to be taught by those whom God has set over you?

The *Imitation* says: "If thou wouldst know and learn anything to the purpose, love to be unknown and to be esteemed as nothing."

III.

"For God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

And thus the secrets of His Divine Heart were revealed to Nicodemus. He came down from heaven because He loved us.

Does He love us still? Does He love you? The tabernacle is your answer.

Do you accept that love, and does it make of your life one long, perfect, grateful service to your King and your Master?

FEBRUARY 15th.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

On Death.

I.

“Thou art dust.”

Dust. Such was our origin, and death our inevitable end; death which shall part us from all earthly things. Nature shrinks from the thought, and yet what is death in itself compared with what may follow it?

“As the tree falleth, so shall it lie.”

Is pride still rampant in you? Can you be puffed up when you know you are but dust?

II.

“Unto dust shalt thou return.”

Is not our whole nature corrupt? Look into yourself; what selfishness, meanness, and baseness do you not find; what blemishes even in your good actions.

We know not when we shall die.

Every day of our lives may have no
morrow.

Are you ready for the call ?

III.

“Thou art dust, and unto dust shalt
thou return.”

Being then but dust, we can only
live by union with Jesus Christ. If we
live a supernatural life with Him we
shall be safe.

Go straight, then, to Jesus, in your
thoughts, words, and actions. Do all
for Him and His love. All that is not
for Him is but dust.

FEBRUARY 16th.

Our Lord washes His Disciples' Feet.

I.

“Knowing that the Father had given
Him all things into His hands, and that
He came from God, and goeth to God,
He riseth from supper, and having taken
a towel, He girded Himself. After that

He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

And thus we behold the King of heaven and earth humbling Himself. And the Heart of Jesus was happy while His sacred Hands wrought this menial office.

And you, who dislike manual labour, and any occupation the world deems ignoble, what do you think of yourself now?

II.

"He cometh therefore to Simon Peter, and Peter saith to Him: Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said to him: What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith to Him: Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him: If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me."

You could have had no part in the kingdom of God unless our Lord had humbled Himself for you. You cannot live without Jesus. Say to Him:

"Lord, do with me what Thou wilt: purify me entirely, no matter by what means; my heart is ready to do Thy holy will."

III.

"Then, after He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, having sat down again, He said to them: Know you what I have done to you? You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I, then, being Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Understand, then, that our Lord wills and expects that those who love Him should imitate Him, and surely it should be sweet to humble oneself with Jesus.

Begin by becoming little in your own eyes. Be ever ready for lowly services, and excuse the faults of others, and go with a humble heart to Jesus humbled for you.

FEBRUARY 17th.

The Last Supper.

I.

“And taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying: This is My Body, which is given for you.”

Admire the Divine Wisdom, which chose so simple a manner of giving Himself to us; the omnipotence which is thus annihilated, and the immense love which is shown forth in this great mystery.

If your heart is touched when you behold your God Incarnate in a little child, what should it be when you see Him under the form of a little bread?

II.

“And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament.”

Each Mass is a true, though unbloody, sacrifice offered by Jesus to His Eternal Father. It is a mystical death. He is for ever a Victim in the midst of us.

Would you be like your Lord? Then you must die to self.

III.

“Do this for a commemoration of Me.”

And thus was given to the Church this great sacrament and perpetual sacrifice, to last till time shall be no more.

Ask yourself very seriously what fruit do you derive from hearing Mass, your communions, and your visits to the Blessed Sacrament?

Are these things a living influence on your life? Ask help from our Lord.

FEBRUARY 18th.

Our Lord speaks of Judas.

I.

“He was troubled in spirit, and said: Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”

Seldom did our Lord show outward marks of suffering, but He did so when

the first sacrilegious communion had been made.

When He enters your soul are you a source of trouble to Him, or can He find His delight therein? Does He find passions that overmaster you, faults you take no pains to correct?

II.

"Now there was leaning on Jesus's bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned unto him, and said to him; Who is it of whom He speaketh?"

The apostles were terrified at our Lord's words, and "looked one upon another," each fearing to be the one of whom He spoke. All were trembling except the guilty one.

Fear above all things that tepidity which hardens the heart.

III.

"He therefore leaning on the breast of Jesus saith to Him: Lord, who is it? Jesus answered: He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped."

Our Lord answers us when we humbly ask for light. He will show us our faults, the way in which we displease Him, the path we ought to follow.

But do you care to know? Do you wish to know His secrets about you, and do you not rather fly from self-knowledge?

Be frank with your Lord.

FEBRUARY 19th.

The Treason of Judas.

I.

“And when He had dipped the bread He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; and after the morsel Satan entered into him.”

He refused the last effort of our Lord to gain him, and the evil one then had full possession over him. Terrible is the example. He had been loaded with graces, brought into close intimacy with Jesus.

Once he had possessed “power and

authority over all devils;" now he was their slave. He began by venial sin, by resisting grace.

II.

"He then, having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night."

The presence of his Master and his brethren was intolerable to him; he fled into the darkness. Blacker than night was his wretched soul.

Never yield to gloomy thoughts; never give yourself up to temptation; but in the darkest hour cling close to the feet of Jesus.

III.

"When, therefore, he was gone out Jesus said: Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

The crimes of the wicked can never frustrate the designs of God; they only serve as means of carrying them out.

Judas was blinded by passion, and so is every one who follows in his steps. Are not all sinners traitors?

Dread, then, this worst enemy of your soul,—sin. Be faithful to Him who has so loved you, and who will, if you suffer Him, be glorified in you.

FEBRUARY 20th.

The Contention among the Apostles.

I.

“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should seem to be greater.”

What a spectacle of human weakness ! In the midst of their amazement and dismay, dreading that their Master was to be betrayed—they still thought of self, and each wanted to be the head when He should be gone, and the lesson taught by the washing of their feet was forgotten.

Behold your own picture ; see how you carry self-love into the holiest action.

II.

“And He said : He who is the greatest among you, let him be as the least ;

and he that is the leader as he that serveth."

Oh, most patient Master! Not a word of reproof falls from His lips; again He begins to teach these men, so variable in their moods, so hard to instruct.

But they loved Him, and He is ever tender to those who give to Him their poor imperfect hearts.

III.

"I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth."

He had taught them by example, and it had sunk into their inmost soul, though for the moment they had forgotten it. That example is before you now.

Is He not amongst us as He that serveth? Does He not give Himself up into the hands of His priests, and obey their word?

Does He not give Himself to you? You can treat Him as you please. Shall it continue so? Will you not let Him be your Master, and reign over your soul?

FEBRUARY 21st.

St. Peter's Presumption.

I.

"And the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

It was not only Judas for which the evil one had striven; he had set his snares for another of the chosen band, even the *rock* on which the Church was to be built. St. Peter was proud, and therefore the devil thought he could conquer him.

II.

"And he said to Him: Lord, I am ready to go with Thee into prison and to death."

He thought himself better than others; he relied on his own strength; he was not "little in his own eyes:"

and much as he loved his Master, he had not taken the pains to study Him.

Do you rely on your own strength? Do you make protestations of love, and then shrink away under temptation?

III.

“Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now. Peter saith to Him: Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee. Jesus answered: Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Amen, Amen, I say to thee, the cock shall not crow till thou deny Me thrice.”

Try and listen in spirit to those sweet sad words. There is no sharpness or reproof in them; only the patient warning of that Heart more tender than a mother's.

And have you made resolutions which you never kept; and offered sacrifices which you instantly took back?

And has He not borne with your weakness? Does He not “make intercession” for you from the tabernacle?

Does He not pray within you after communion?

St. Peter had made a worthy communion, and in its mighty strength he was at last to conquer Satan.

FEBRUARY 22nd.

Gethsemane.

I.

“Jesus went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where there was a garden, into which He entered with His disciples.”

The hour of His Passion was drawing nigh, and our Lord went forth to pray.

Is prayer your refuge in trial, and when you foresee trial is coming upon you; or do you try to meet temptation in your own strength?

II.

“And He saith to His disciples: Sit you here while I pray. And He taketh Peter and James and John with Him.”

Our Lord chose three of His apostles to stay with Him, to show us He does not require us to refuse all human consolation in trial; and He chose them only, to teach us we must not expect to find much consolation in life, and chiefly from those whom He chooses to watch over our souls.

III.

“Then He saith to them: Stay you here and watch with Me.”

Our Lord did not oblige His apostles to pray, He only asked them; and those who are called to His special service are never compelled to come in.

“Stay you here and watch with Me.”

Will you accept that invitation? Will you stay by the tabernacle and watch with Him, and thus console the Heart of Jesus?

Will you bear for His sake weariness and disgust in prayer? Will you suffer for His sake, and for love of Him?

FEBRUARY 23rd.**The Interior Sufferings of our Lord.****I.**

“He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad.”

The enemies of our Lord could not touch His soul, but His great love for us induced Him to go through every sort of pain that His creatures can ever feel.

Fear of death, dread of physical sufferings, that heart-sickness which no words can express,—He would pass through them all. He filled His Heart with all our miseries, that we might experience all His mercies.

II.

“He began to fear and to be heavy.”

Before the mind of our all-perfect Lord, to whom the faintest shadow of sin is horrible, there now passed in review all the sins of men. He looked

into the lowest, vilest depths of human iniquity, and He saw all this mass of sin imputed to Him, laid on Him, and His soul was covered with confusion.

He felt the terrors of remorse and of estrangement from God. He bore the bitterness of shame for those who are so little ashamed of themselves.

III.

“My soul is sorrowful even unto death.”

He saw the souls that, in spite of His immolation, should be lost. He saw the ingratitude of men, and it broke His Heart.

He loved us more than He suffered for us: for His sufferings had an end; His love is eternal.

He saw you,—the graces you have abused, your obstinacy in sin, your tardy repentance, your want of shame.

And is it over yet? Does He ever come into your heart in Holy Communion very sorrowfully?

FEBRUARY 24th.

The Prayer of our Lord in the Garden.

I.

“And He was withdrawn from them a stone’s cast; and kneeling down, He prayed.”

See our Model, in prayer, recollection, and humble posture.

“He fell upon His face.”

Lower and lower still did He fall before the God whom we had offended.

Adore that beautiful Face, bowed to the earth under the weight of your sins, and learn how you should act when trouble and anguish come upon you,—bow down, never low enough, at the feet of your God.

II.

“And He prayed, that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said : Abba, Father, all things are possible to Thee; take away this chalice from Me.”

Behold how great was the anguish that brought forth this cry from Him who had been "straitened until it be accomplished."

We, then, may pray in our hours of anguish to have our trials removed from us, if we ask it with our dear Lord.

"But not what I will, but as Thou wilt."

There is our model of perfect submission. Never fight against the will of God, because that will is all mercy.

III.

"He prayed, saying the same words."

Remark that, notwithstanding the utter desolation of our Lord, His prayer was long, and He repeated the same prayer,—“If it be possible; but yet, not My will, but Thine be done.”

Do you persevere in prayer during the hours of darkness or temptation when broken down with suffering?

Our salvation rests on our perseverance, and our sanctity depends on the perfect union of our wills with that of God.

FEBRUARY 25th.

The Angel of the Agony.

I.

“And being in an agony, He prayed the longer.”

It is supposed by the Fathers that the agony of our Lord was caused by the combat between His mortal nature and the will of God, for He was “tempted in all things like as we are without sin.”

There is no human suffering that our Lord has not gone through. All that are not expressly named may be summed up in this long agony.

II.

“And His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground.”

Kiss in spirit the ground thus bathed with your Saviour's Blood. Compassionate that dear Lord in His cruel suffering for you. Be covered with shame

at the share you have had in causing this mortal anguish.

Those drops of blood were the tokens of that undying love which you have so often despised.

III.

“And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him.”

The chalice was not taken from Him, but strength to endure was given.

What wondrous humility it was in our Lord to receive strength from an inferior being, an angel whom He had created.

When you are in mortal anguish, it is not only angels that will console you, but He who has created you, and suffered for you, and shown you how to suffer.

Do you not love and bless that angel that came to Him?

It is in your power also to console the Heart of Jesus beating in the tabernacle, and in those “least brethren” in whom He is found. Will you do so?

FEBRUARY 26th.

The Sleep of the Apostles.

I.

“And He cometh and findeth them sleeping.”

And this was the first return He had from creatures for the mortal agony He had endured for their sakes.

“And He saith to Peter: Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour?”

How gentle was the reproach to him who but one hour ago was boasting of his devotion.

Do not these words sound in your ears, “Could you not watch one hour?” Is it too great a weariness to pray and to suffer a little while with Jesus?

II.

“And when He returned He found them again asleep (for their eyes were heavy): and they knew not what to answer Him.”

Truly was the prophecy fulfilled, "I sought for one to comfort Me, and I found none."

And we may indeed suffer from the loss or separation of those dear to us; but we need never be alone, we can always have Him who "when all forsake will not leave thee."

III.

"Sleep ye now, and take rest. It is enough; the hour is come."

They who could not keep awake to console their Master were to be more roughly roused. They would not pray when their Lord exhorted them to do so, and now in the hour of temptation they were to find out their own weakness.

Is it not often so with you?

Deplore your weakness, and ask your all-merciful Lord to be still patient with you.

FEBRUARY 27th.

The Kiss of Judas.

I.

“Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near to Jesus for to kiss Him. And he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He; hold Him.”

The example of Judas is one to make us tremble. He came from the band nearest to our Lord, those devoted to His service, trained and taught by Himself.

Who then can feel safe? Who then, however long He may have served God, or however zealously, can feel sure of perseverance? To each of us it is said, “Take heed to thyself lest thou fall.”

II.

“And forthwith coming to Jesus, he said: Hail, Rabbi. And he kissed Him.”

The kiss of Judas was the worst outrage of the Passion; and the infidelity of one specially consecrated to His service, or who has lived in the full light of His faith and love, is far more bitter to the Heart of Jesus than the vices of the ignorant and altogether worldly. A sacrilegious communion closely resembles the kiss of Judas.

Will you not make reparation to the wounded and outraged Heart of your Master?

III.

“And Jesus said unto him: Friend, wherefore art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Even the deadly hypocrisy of Judas met with tenderness from the Heart of Jesus. Even now repentance was possible to him.

Have you ever betrayed the love of Jesus, for the world, for a creature, for a passion?

Every sin is a treachery against our Master.

Those tender words did pierce the

heart of Judas, but he would not humble himself, and so fell into despair.

Then let each of us watch, pray, tremble; but above all, love and trust our Saviour.

FEBRUARY 28th.

The Apprehension of our Lord.

I.

“Judas having received a band of soldiers and servants, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore went forward, and said to them: Whom seek ye?”

Our Lord has no fear of men, for He was perfect innocence.

And in His service we should have no fear. What can prevent our duty?

“Whom seek ye?”

Are you really seeking our Lord; or, under the pretence of so doing, serving yourself?

II.

"They answered Him; Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith to them: I am He."

Never will He deny Himself to those who ask for Jesus of Nazareth. He will either give consolation to His own, or terror to His enemies.

"They went backward, and fell to the ground."

If He could thus terrify His enemies when He was their victim, what will it be when He is their Judge?

Do you so live that Jesus may often say to you, "*I am He*"?

III.

"Again therefore He asked them: Whom seek ye? And they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way."

How tender is the Heart of Jesus! He is thinking of the Apostles, who had not thought of Him in His agony.

"That the word might be fulfilled,

which He said: Of those whom Thou hast given Me, I have not lost any one."

And thus He watches over us now. What can we fear when we serve so good a Master?

Keep close to Him; be ever among those who are given to Him, and whom He shall never lose.

FEBRUARY 29th.

Peter and Malchus.*

I.

"And Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And the name of the servant was Malchus."

It often happens that those who will not serve our Lord as He desires show false zeal.

* The following Meditation is so arranged that in the years in which February has only twenty-eight days the continuity of the subjects presented will not be broken.

St. Peter would not watch and pray with his Master, and now he acts by an impulse of passion.

Are you not often like unto him ?

II.

“Then Jesus said to Peter : Put up thy sword into the scabbard. The chalice which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it? Thinkest thou that I cannot ask My Father, and He will give Me presently more than twelve legions of angels ?”

And in the hour of sorrow and trial cannot you be sure that if it were good for you God could send His angels to deliver you? Have you never wasted time and strength on useless fretting over adverse circumstances, when you could have found peace in drinking the chalice that your Father had given you?

III.

“And when He had touched his ear He healed him.”

The last act of those divine hands

132 SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

before they were tightly bound by His persecutors was to heal the wounds of one of the very band. How different He is from us: we so ready to strike, to blame, and punish others; we with our unkindness, hard judgments, and other cruel actions; and He perfect patience and sweetness.

“Do good to them that hate you.”

Can you not say to Him: “Lord, often I have shown hatred towards Thee by my sins; often have I persecuted Thee. Now, Lord, do Thy part as Thou art ever wont; do good to my poor soul; heal me also, that I may not be deaf when Thou dost call.”

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

MARCH.

CONTENTS FOR MARCH.

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DAY	PAGE
1. Our Lord yields Himself up to the Soldiers ..	135
2. The House of Annas	137
3. Our Lord before the High-priest ..	139
4. The Denial of St. Peter	141
5. Our Lord is Condemned by Caiphas ..	143
6. The Night in the High-priest's House ..	145
7. The Despair of Judas	147
8. Our Lord before Pilate	149
9. Our Lord at the Court of Herod ..	151
10. The Dream of Pilate's Wife	153
11. Barabbas	155
12. The Scourging of our Lord	157
13. The Crown of Thorns	159
14. Jesus before the People	161
15. Pilate Delivers up our Lord	163
16. Jesus Carries His Cross	165
17. Simon of Cyrene	167
18. The Women of Jerusalem	169
19. Our Lady in the Way of Sorrows ..	171
20. The Veil of Veronica	173
21. Calvary	175
22. The Crucifixion	177
23. Mary at the Foot of the Cross	179
24. The Title of the Cross	181
25. Our Lord's Garments	183
26. The Words of our Lord on the Cross ..	185
27. The same, continued	188
28. Our Lord's Death	190
29. The Piercing of the Heart of Jesus ..	192
30. The Taking Down from the Cross	193
31. The Burial of Jesus	195

SUPPLEMENTARY MEDITATIONS.

Palm Sunday	198
The Feast of St. Joseph	200
The Feast of the Incarnation, or Annunciation of our Blessed Lady	201

SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR MARCH.

MARCH 1st.

**Our Lord yields Himself up to the
Soldiers.**

I.

“And Jesus said: Are you come out as it were against a thief, with swords and clubs? But this is your hour and the power of darkness.”

When you indulge your passions you also bind our Lord, and it is your hour. But cannot you, by your resignation and devotedness, make of this short life another hour, which shall be God's as well as yours?

II.

“Then the band took Jesus and bound Him.”

How tightly they drew the cords, till they cut into the tender virginal Flesh of our dear Lord, and until they made Him a complete prisoner, unable to help Himself.

Do you bind your proud spirit and strong passions with the cords of mortification and submission ?

III.

“Then His disciples, leaving Him, all fled away.”

They saw their Master, as they thought, conquered, and their boasted courage failed, and they fled away. They thought of themselves, not of Him.

How many times have you been a coward in His service; afraid of Him before the world, before some creature; afraid to keep too close to Him? He “delivered Himself up for you.”

Kiss in spirit those bound and fettered hands of Him who by His bonds has set you free.

MARCH 2nd.**The House of Annas.****I.**

“And they led Him away to Annas first.”

Placed as a malefactor in the midst of the soldiers, and roughly dragged along with His hands bound, our Lord fell into the brook Cedron, and fulfilled the words, “He shall drink of the torrent on the way.”

Our Lord had given Himself up, and creatures could treat Him as they would.

Do you submit to those whom God has placed over you? Are you ready to go where His Providence calls you?

II.

“For he was father-in-law to Caiphas, who was the high-priest of that year.”

It was about midnight when the armed band with their Prisoner passed through the streets of Jerusalem.

Adore Him your Redeemer. Kiss in spirit those cords that bind Him. Follow Him in spirit along those streets where He went so willingly for love of you.

III.

"Now Caiphas was he who had given the counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."

The conducting of our Lord to Annas was only another insult paid Him, to gratify probably the curiosity of Annas.

Contemplate your King thus dragged about as a captive.

Will you not at least let Him reign over *you*?

When He comes into your heart, is it to live there, or only to linger a few minutes, without receiving homage or love?

MARCH 3rd.**Our Lord before the High-priest.****I.**

"The high-priest then asked Jesus of His disciples and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him: I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple; ask them who have heard what I have spoken to them."

Our Lord made no answer about His apostles; one had betrayed Him, and the others had fled; but He said no word of blame.

Are you silent about the faults of others; and can you be sure that all those who hear you speak can bear testimony that you have glorified your God thereby?

II.

"One of the servants standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying: Answerest Thou the high-priest so?"

Can you ever complain of a humiliation after reading these words? To save you from your sins, the God-Man, the Incarnate Word, was struck by an insolent servant!

And you, have you never aimed a blow at Him, by disregarding His will, by unkindness to those who represent Him?

"As long as you did it not to one of these least ones, neither did you do it to Me."

III.

"Jesus answered him: If I have spoken ill, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?"

Our Lord spoke thus because He would not have any one suppose that He had despised the high-priest.

Always does He wish us to obey lawful authority.

Resolve to endure most patiently any insult or affronts you may receive.

MARCH 4th.

The Denial of St. Peter.

I.

“Now the servants stood at a fire of coals, because it was cold, and warmed themselves. And with them was Peter also standing, and warmed himself. They said therefore to him: Art not thou also one of His disciples? He denied it, and said: I am not.”

While his Master was suffering, St. Peter was looking to his own comfort.

We shall never be faithful to our Lord unless we practice mortification.

While Peter warmed himself his love was growing cold, and he fell.

How often have you, when trusting to your own strength, denied our Lord by sin?

II.

“And again a maid servant seeing him, began to say: This is one of them.

But he denied again. And the cock crew."

St. Peter was so possessed by fear that he dared not leave the place, so he stayed in the occasion of sin, and fell again. The voice of a servant girl struck terror into him.

The sound of his fall re-echoes through the long ages of the Church to teach us our own weakness.

Let the prayer of a saint be often on your lips: "Take care of me, Lord, this day, or I shall betray Thee."

III.

"And about the space of one hour after another affirmed: Surely this man was also with Him. But he began to curse and to swear, saying: I know not this Man of whom you speak. And immediately, as he was speaking, the cock crew; and the Lord, turning, looked on Peter."

Nothing can better make us understand the infinite love and mercy of the Heart of Jesus.

Adore those divine eyes, so full of tender compassion for His sinful child.

“And Peter remembered the word of the Lord ; and going out, he began to weep.”

And we can well believe the tradition that during his long life each cock crowing in the early dawn found St. Peter weeping over his fault.

You, then, often have denied the Lord, like Peter. Oh, then, strive like him, for that abiding sorrow for sin that transforms the sinner into the saint.

MARCH 5th.

Our Lord is Condemned by Caiphas.

I.

“For many bore false witness against Him. And the high priest saying : Answerest Thou nothing ? But He held His peace and answered nothing.”

Learn a great lesson from this divine silence. Be not eager to excuse or jus-

tify yourself. Carefully avoid breaking the peace of your soul by idle, useless words.

II.

“And the high-priest said to Him: I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us if Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it.”

Our Lord kept silence while false witness was made against Him, but when called on for the truth He spoke out.

And, like our Master, you must be ready to confess the faith, even if your life should pay the forfeit.

III.

“Then the high-priest rent his garments, saying: He hath blasphemed. What think you? But they answering, said: He is guilty of death.”

See how, under the influence of passion, Caiphas entirely ignored his office as judge, and excited the others to condemn the Man-God whom they hated.

He rent his robe, little thinking how

he thus figured the destruction of the priesthood of the old law to give way to the new.

Pray fervently that your passions may never gain the mastery over you, and send you from the side of Jesus.

MARCH 6th.

The Night in the High-priest's House.

I.

“And the men that held Him mocked Him and struck Him.”

Caiphas and his party withdrew in order to take further steps to ensure the destruction of our Lord, and meanwhile He was left to be the sport and victim of the debased and savage soldiery.

Fall in lowly adoration before that Face which was struck by these vile hands, that glorious Majesty thus insulted.

II.

“And some began to spit on Him.”

Do not these words make you tremble? Are you not covered with shame when you think with what resentment *you* would treat the very same insult shown to yourself? And yet how seldom and how little do you ponder over it as given to your Lord.

Spitting was a mark of the profound contempt in which these Romans held the prisoner persecuted by His own race.

Have you never despised our Lord when you sinned?

III.

“And they blindfolded Him, and smote Him on the face.”

They covered the eyes of Him who can see every hidden thought of ours.

“And they said: Prophecy who it is that struck Thee.”

They thought He would not know.

And you, are you true with God? Do you act always with pure motives? Do you not fancy yourself that God does

not see and read the innermost folds of your heart?

How many souls there are blind to their own defects because they do not wish for light.

Do not be like them, but ask your Lord to show your own self to you, and with it a strong view of His love and His mercy.

MARCH 7th.

The Despair of Judas.

I.

"Then Judas who betrayed Him, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood."

Probably Judas thought our Lord would save His life by a miracle. The devil always blinds and deludes his victims, making them believe beforehand the fault is not so great as it seems, and then, when it is committed, he strives to drive them into despair.

Judas repented because he feared the consequences of his sin. Passion had had its indulgence, and therefore lost its charm, and he knew but too well who it was that he had offended.

II.

“But they said: What is that to us? Look thou to it.”

The wicked never have pity on their fellow-sinners; they always leave them to their fate.

The holier a man is, the more does he compassionate those who fall.

There was plenty of help for Judas if he had sought it. Our Lady would have pitied him; the Heart of Jesus would have pardoned him; but he would not cry to his Saviour, nor trust in His mercy.

III.

“And casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and went and hanged himself with a halter.”

The history of Judas is a true picture of sin. He never even enjoyed the

fruits of his treachery. Sin is always, as of old, "delightful to behold," and then very bitter to the taste.

But learn from this terrible example that the end of all sin is despair; for in it the sinner denies the power and the love of the God who created, of the Saviour who redeemed him.

Fall at your Lord's feet, and beg for the gift of a boundless confidence in Him, who can make our sins, "though as scarlet, white as snow."

MARCH 8th.

Our Lord before Pilate.

I.

"As soon as it was day, the whole multitude of them, rising up, led Him to Pilate."

There was no lingering on their part; they were thirsting for vengeance.

"Art Thou the King of the Jews?" said Pilate to our Lord. He answered, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Dwell on these words. Your inheritance, your kingdom, is not of this world. You have nothing to expect from earth. Do not, then, cling to anything on it.

II.

“And the chief priests accused Him in many things. But Jesus still answered nothing.”

Our Lord never justified Himself nor answered His accusers, to teach us to endure calumny and affronts in silence. But silence under false accusation is a rare virtue, and “the governor wondered exceedingly.”

Do not, then, let evil speaking disturb your peace. Be content that God should know the truth.

III.

“I find no cause in this Man.”

Therefore of course our Lord should have been set free, and His enemies punished. But it was not so to be.

Does not God say to you, “I find no

cause in Him?" For your sins, then, He has suffered, and is offered day by day for you. What return will you make?

MARCH 9th.

Our Lord at the Court of Herod.

I.

"He sent Him away to Herod: and Herod was very glad, for he was desirous of a long time to see Him, and he hoped to see some miracle wrought by Him."

Behold our Lord bound as a criminal, hustled through the public streets, sent by the judge who knew Him to be innocent, to gratify the evil curiosity of the rude and sensual Herod.

And can you complain of hard duties, of the changes that God's providence brings about for you?

II.

"And he questioned Him with many words: but He answered him nothing."

Our Lord would not gratify the curiosity of the world. He has taught us, "Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet."

We ought not to speak of divine things unless it is to glorify our God.

III.

"And Herod with his soldiers despised Him, and mocked Him, putting on Him a white garment; and sent Him back to Pilate."

And so through the long ages will it ever be with those who truly follow Jesus Christ. The world will always think them fools, will ever set them at nought, and put some mark or title of derision on them.

And will you be ashamed to follow your Master in the path of contempt? Will you shrink from ridicule, be turned from your purpose for fear of what people may say? Rather fall down before that Lord humbled and despised for you, and adore Him as your King.

MARCH 10th.

The Dream of Pilate's Wife.

I.

“And as he was sitting on the judgment-seat, his wife sent to him, saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream on account of Him.”

What an example of courage did this woman show?

Do you stand boldly forward to defend the honour of your Lord, the faith of His Church, when it falls to your lot to do so? Do you follow the secret inspirations of grace?

II.

“And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him. But the Jews cried out, saying: If thou release this Man, thou art not Cæsar's friend.”

A struggle was going on in the so-

of Pilate between the voice of conscience and his selfish fears.

Terrible is the strength of human respect. We fear to displease a mortal man, who at the worst can only injure us on earth, and we do not fear Him who hath power over our eternity.

III.

“And Pilate saith to them: Why, what evil hath He done?”

And thus by the voice of the judge himself our Lord was declared innocent.

Oftentimes you are eager to prove your own innocence. What have I done?

Then turn to your Lord and say, “What evil have I done to Thee?” In every sin that you committed you were crying, “Crucify Him.” You are very guilty before Him.

Bear therefore gladly for His sake harshness and injustice from men, if so it be His will.

MARCH 11th.

Barabbas.

I.

“Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”

And so our Lord, all-perfect, all-innocent, very God of God, was weighed in the balance with a desperate malefactor.

How would you act if you were compared to some notorious sinner? How do you act when you find that those about you think little of you? Are you glad to take the lowest place, or do you feel it is the only fitting one for you?

II.

“But the whole multitude cried out at once, saying: Away with this Man, and release unto us Barabbas.”

Have you never joined in this cry, “Away with this yoke, and give me the indulgence of my passion”?

And as you behold your Lord thus humbled before His whole people, cannot you be calm under humiliation, when you are set on one side?

III.

“ So Pilate, being willing to satisfy the people, released unto them Barabbas.”

And at last evil triumphed in the heart of Pilate. He took the first step in the downward path by giving up Barabbas. He fancied he should still save our Lord's life, and thus strove to deceive himself.

Be on your guard against self-deceit. If you have any charge or authority, strive never to fail in strict justice. Have your eyes constantly fixed on Jesus your Master.

MARCH 12th.

The Scourging of our Lord.

I.

“Then therefore Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him.”

The soldiers were animated by a more than common savage cruelty, and with all their enormous strength they scourged the delicate virgin Flesh of Jesus till His Sacred Body was but one immense wound; then they at last undid the cords which bound Him to the column, and our Lord fell on the ground.

Adore Him there in spirit, and listen to the voice from those open wounds, bidding you restrain the indulgence of your body.

II.

“I will chastise Him therefore, and release Him.”

Unjust and cruel as it would have been in itself to chastise an innocent

man, the promise was not kept. Our Lord went through both punishments, the scourging and the crucifixion.

The soldiers dragged Him down the twenty-eight marble stairs of Pilate's palace, and led Him into the court, and there He was stripped naked before the eyes of a cruel, brutal mob. He endured that shame that you might have the grace of shame for your sins. Pray that you may indeed have it.

III.

"I will chastise Him therefore, and let Him go."

Look in spirit at the pillar to which our Lord was bound, figure of the firmness of our dear Lord; and the cords which bind Him, true image of the cords of His love.

Reflect, as you hear in spirit the falling of the blows, see the streams of Blood, and the torn Flesh, how terrible is the vengeance of an offended God.

This is the punishment of those sins of which we, of which you, are so little ashamed.

Have you never shrunk from laying bare your soul in the sacrament of penance to avoid a little passing confusion?

Make your resolutions for the future at the feet of Jesus scourged at the pillar.

MARCH 13th.

The Crown of Thorns.

I.

"Then the soldiers gathered together unto Him the whole band; and stripping Him, they put a scarlet cloak about Him."

Again and again was the torture of stripping inflicted on Him, the perfect model of virginal modesty, and each time the garments had to be torn from the wounded flesh to which they adhered.

How do you bear bodily suffering? Are you very patient and courageous? Do you unite your sufferings with those of our Lord?

II.

"And plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand; and spitting upon Him, they took the reed and struck His Head."

No other has ever suffered the torture of a crown of thorns.

He alone is our King. Fall down at His feet in lowly adoration.

See Him expiating the sins of your rebellious intellect, your memory, your imagination. The meek Victim in the hands of the soldiers atones for all your disobedience.

Offer Him all your mental powers, to be employed in His service; and resolve to be perfectly submissive to His will.

III.

"And bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews."

Contemplate the adorable Face before which the soldiers offered this impious homage.

"I have not turned away My Face from them that spit upon Me."

And even in this our day is not insult offered to His image, and to Himself in His Sacrament?

Will you not devote yourself with all your strength to make Him reparation, to offer true homage and grateful love to Him who thus abased Himself for love of you?

MARCH 14th.

Jesus before the People.

I.

"So Jesus came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment; and Pilate said to them: Behold the Man."

God says these words to each of us: "Behold the Man," such as sin has made Him. See how in Him sin has been expiated.

One day God will show you to the

angels and say, "Behold the creature who was made in My image, redeemed by My Son, before whose eyes His life and death were set for a pattern." And will He add, that you have copied that pattern, that you have followed those steps?

II.

"When the chief priests, therefore, and the officers had seen Him, they cried out, Crucify Him, crucify Him."

Probably the sight of our Lord might have aroused a feeling of compassion in some of the crowd, so His enemies began to excite them against Him, and pity was changed into fury. "Crucify Him, crucify Him."

Alas, that cry is repeated by every wilful sin. Offer yourself, then, in union with your Lord.

III.

"Pilate saith to them: Take Him you and crucify Him, for I find no cause in Him."

Listen to what God is saying now to you.

Take Jesus into your heart, and save Him, by your fervour, your love, your fidelity, from His cruel enemies. In the tabernacle is He not always the Man of Sorrows, insulted, outraged by the wicked even among His own people?

Compassion is not enough; you must love, and be generous in your love. You must suffer with Him and for Him if you will indeed be on His side and glorify Him.

MARCH 15th.

Pilate Delivers up our Lord.

I.

“Pilate having taken water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just Man; look you to it.”

But neither his words nor this vain ceremony could free him from his guilt.

Have you not often proclaimed your innocence when you were guilty, trying

to blind your own eyes as well as those of others? Do you not often cast the blame on others so as to escape; or blame circumstances, which is to blame God?

II.

“And all the people answering, said : His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

Ask our Lord, in a very different sense from the Jews in their blind rage, that His Blood be upon you and yours.

Beg Him that it may fall on your memory, understanding, and will; that it may sanctify the senses of your body and the powers of your soul. Pray that His adorable Blood may purify the earth, save sinners, and convert heretics.

III.

“Jesus he delivered up to their will.”

No sentence was pronounced; the judge yielded to pressure and to ignoble fear, and delivered up the innocent.

And while life lasts Jesus is ever being delivered up to your will.

How do you treat Him? Is He your

King and your Master, or is He your slave, or is He neglected and forgotten ?

Fall now at His feet, and tell Him what it shall be for the future.

MARCH 16th.

Jesus Carries His Cross.

I.

“They took off the purple from Him, and put His own garments on Him.”

They did not take off the crown of thorns.

Will you not wear a wreath like unto your Lord ?

Be patient when the thorns of life prick you. Unite your suffering to His, your pain and weariness with His, and the unction of His love will give you wonderful peace and joy.

II.

“And they took Jesus, and led Him

forth; and bearing His own cross, He went forth."

And with the same serene sweetness and perfect calm that He had preserved since His agony was over, He went forth to His death in the prime of His early manhood, and through the streets of His royal city in the midst of His own people.

Behold Him bending under the weight of His cross, already worn out by His terrible sufferings.

Will you follow Him? Will you cease complaints and murmurs at your trials henceforth?

III.

"And bearing His own cross, He went forth to that place which is called Calvary."

Follow Him in spirit along that rough, hard road, the Way of Sorrows. Behold Him falling under the weight of His cross. There is none to comfort Him. Perhaps the soldiers kick Him to make Him get up. They are sure to be cruel, for their hatred is satanic.

But do you pity Him? Do you strive to comfort Him by following Him?

“To suffer, therefore, is what awaits thee, if thou art resolved to love Jesus, and constantly to serve Him.”

MARCH 17th.

Simon of Cyrena.

I.

“They forced one Simon of Cyrene, who passed by, coming out of the country, to take up His cross.”

Our Lord had fallen three times, and the soldiers, fearing He might die on the way, looked about for some one on whom to lay the burden. They seized on a countryman, ignorant of what had passed, and in spite of his resistance, forced him to bear the cross.

And he is the pattern of us all. We must bear the cross; we cannot pass through life without it; and how un-

willingly do we accept it, thereby losing our merit.

II.

“And they laid the cross on him, to carry after Jesus.”

According to tradition, Simon's unwillingness soon passed away. A special grace no doubt was given to him: and he had taken no share in the persecution of our Lord.

And God gives to many of us the grace to submit willingly to bear our cross, and *then* it becomes sweet.

Are you among that number?

III.

“To carry after Jesus.”

No doubt Simon shared a little in the mockery and contempt of the crowd, carrying the symbol of shame, the cross.

Oh, do you be willing to bear contempt likewise for bearing the cross of Christ.

“If you please men you cannot be the servant of Christ:” so says St. Paul.

Be brave in following your Lord up

the steep road to Calvary by suffering humiliation and shame. Be content with whatever cross God wills to give you, if only you "carry it after Jesus."

MARCH 18th.

The Women of Jerusalem.

I.

"And there followed Him a great multitude of people and of women, who bewailed and lamented Him."

This multitude figures the human race gaping at the Passion, some bitter enemies, some indifferent, some moved with compassion, but doing nothing for our Lord, and some devoted to Him.

In which of these classes are you to be found?

II.

"But Jesus, turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Our Lord did not care for a mere human compassion; He wanted them to sorrow because they saw their God thus treated, and to sorrow for the sin of putting Him to death, and for the punishment that sin would bring.

III.

“For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?”

The fruit of meditation on the Passion is sorrow for sin, and detestation of sin.

The punishment that God inflicted on His only Son enables us to understand how horrible sin is in His eyes. What then “will be done in the dry”? What will be the fate of those who die hardened in sin?

Ask, then, your good Lord, by the virtue of the cross He bore for you up the Way of Sorrows, to give you true sorrow and shame for your sins.

MARCH 19th.

Our Lady in the Way of Sorrows.

I.

"Oh, all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

According to the constant tradition of the Church, our Lady met our Divine Lord on the way to Calvary. Probably she had not seen Him since His Passion began.

How can we imagine what she felt? She who knew so well what He was, who He was; she who loved Him as a creature should *perfectly* love its God, more, far more than any other mother could love a child, and with the most devoted love for His Sacred Humanity of which a creature is capable.

II.

"Wasted with sorrow all the day long."

And when we turn to our Lord

can we express in words what His suffering was. His tender and beloved Mother, the one joy and consolation of His Heart, broken down with sorrow. What a night had not she gone through; what a martyrdom was hers while the stripes and the insults fell on Him!

We know what havoc one day of intense sorrow can work in our frame. In that one day our Lady must have been terribly changed.

III.

“There is none to comfort her.”

No; there is no use in human comfort. If they speak she will not hear them. Her whole soul is rent and torn by an anguish of which we can only form a faint idea.

When sorrow which seems unendurable comes to you, is your refuge the broken Heart of Mary? Do you go to her for help and comfort, and do you strive now to console her for that awful dolour on the Way of Sorrows?

MARCH 20th.

The Veil of Veronica.

I.

“So shall His visage be inglorious among men.”

One courageous woman pressed forward and gave our Lord a linen veil, with which to wipe off from His Face the blood, the sweat, and the spittle with which He was defiled, and the impress of His adorable Face was left upon the linen. For that act of love this woman obtained the gift of sanctity, and that linen veil is considered one of the precious treasures of the Church.

Adore that Face disfigured and insulted for your sake.

II.

“And His look was, as it were, hidden and despised.”

Many pious souls have had a special devotion to the adorable Face of our Lord, and have striven to make repar-

tion to Him for the outrages given to it in His Passion.

No insult is so keenly felt by men as that given in the face.

If our Lord so rewarded the charity of St. Veronica, will He not reward you if you give honour to the image of His holy Face, if you often meditate on the insults bestowed upon Him.

III.

“And they shall see His Face.”

Such is our one hope,—one day to see His Face, not disfigured as in the streets of Jerusalem, but radiant in everlasting bliss. And will He not look with special love and pity on those who while on earth loved that Face while “hidden and despised of men”?

“I salute Thee, I adore Thee, and I love Thee, O adorable Face of my Jesus. My well-beloved, noble seal of the divinity, I give Thee all the powers of my soul, and beg Thee humbly to implant in me Thy divine likeness.”

MARCH 21st.

Galvary.

I.

“And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh, but He took it not.”

It is probable that the soldiers again thought our Lord would die before He could be fastened to the cross, and they offered Him a potion which would partly still the pains He suffered. But He would not spare Himself one pang; He would suffer on for you.

Do you not often grow weary of suffering for Him?

II.

“And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with gall, and when He had tasted He would not drink.”

This time our Lord tasted the cup to fulfil a prophecy, “And they gave Me gall for My food,” and to make the sense of taste suffer.

How do you stand as regards mortification in food? Do you cheerfully take what is set before you, even when it is repugnant to you? Are you submissive on this point in time of sickness?

III.

“They gave Me gall for My meat.”

This is what we His people gave to Him. What is the food He gives us in return? His own Body and Blood.

And how have you dealt with that Food? Have you never given Him gall in return?—when yielding to weariness you fled from His presence and neglected prayer; when He found unmortified passions reigning in your heart, nay, even when you preferred the passing gratification of your palate to His more perfect service.

MARCH 22nd.

The Crucifixion.

I.

"They crucified Him about the sixth hour."

It was the hour of the mid-day heat when this dread crime was wrought. Our Lord had been laid down on the cross, and enormous nails had secured His outstretched hands and His feet, and then the cross was lifted into its place, and the Victim hung between heaven and earth.

Will you not, then, lie down on your cross, and be nailed to it by your love and your devotion to Him who gave Himself up to you?

II.

"They crucified Him there; and the robbers, one on the right, and the other on the left."

Now were the words fulfilled, "He was reputed with the wicked."

Our Lord thus made the sacrifice of His reputation.

Few things are more painful to us than to lose our good name, to lie under false accusation.

Has this ever happened to you, and have you borne it well and generously, in union with Jesus crucified?

III.

“They crucified Him.”

Go to Calvary in spirit, and kneel at the foot of the cross. Look upon this great spectacle, your God and your Creator nailed to the cross, and thus expiating the sins of the world.

The contemplation should produce in your soul a shame for past sins, and a horror of fresh ones, and also a boundless confidence in Him who has paid so noble a ransom for us.

MARCH 23rd.

Mary at the Foot of the Cross.

I.

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His Mother."

Now were the words fulfilled in their utmost sense, "A sword shall pierce thy soul."

Our Lady, beholding the sufferings of her best-beloved, went through a true martyrdom.

She "stood," These words are recorded to show how she accepted all, and was calm even while her Heart broke in its anguish.

Say, then, with St. Austin, "O Mother of love and sorrow, grant that I may love and suffer after thy example. Queen of martyrs, let me share thy martyrdom. Love gave you the cross; let the cross give me love."

II.

"When Jesus therefore saw His Mother standing."

With His dying eyes He looked on her, the one being that had been ever faithful to Him from His Incarnation to His Death. She kissed that cross down which fell slowly the Precious Blood. Perhaps she could even reach His feet. In her ears rang the sound of blasphemies and bitter mockings. None pitied her suffering through her Son, as none pitied that Son, Victim for the sins of men.

Will you not pity her now? Will you not weep over those sins by means of which her sinless heart was broken?

III.

"His Mother standing."

She stood because she was offering a sacrifice. She was consenting to the death of her only Son, her well-beloved. She was saying as truly now, "Be it done to me according to Thy word," as

in her little cell at Nazareth in her early youth.

Her Heart was so perfectly in union with that of Jesus that what He desired she desired, what He yearned after, so did she; and thus she gave Him the only consolation that He could receive.

And the only consolation you can give to Jesus crucified on the cross, and Mary crucified in heart, is by helping them to save souls,—your own first, and by your sanctification those of others.

Will you not make this promise to your sorrowful Mother to-day?

MARCH 24th.

The Title of the Cross.

I.

“And Pilate wrote a title also, and he put it upon the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

Thus, in the hour of His death, as in

the hour of His birth, His sovereignty was recognized. And He is ever a King. Even on earth, despite of His foes, He reigns from the cross with His thorny crown; and in heaven for ever and ever.

II.

"And it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin."

Thus all the strangers who had come to Jerusalem for the feast could read it, and know that Jesus died for the salvation of all the world.

Venerable Bede says that the title over the cross signifies that the divine majesty of Jesus Christ shines far above the weakness and suffering of His human nature.

Do you recognize the sovereignty of Jesus crucified? Does He reign over you?

III.

"This title, therefore, many of the Jews read, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city."

And in our days many people look at the cross, consider the Passion, and derive no fruit.

The cross of Christ is always nigh, always at hand, to save those who come unto it.

It is not sufficient to know what our Lord did ; we must imitate His life and His sufferings, or our days will pass in barren reflections.

Is your life a practical one, and a life after Jesus Christ, and with Jesus Christ?

MARCH 25th.

Our Lord's Garments.

I.

"And they sat and watched Him."

And the mighty lesson which that sight could have taught them was unheeded.

Do I ever watch others for unkind motives, or even only from idle curiosity?

That curiosity may retard many a

weak soul in the spiritual life who fears criticism; and therefore if you indulge this passion you are joining that band of enemies of Jesus, making His death more cruel by your unkind eyes.

II.

“Then the soldiers took His garments, and they made four parts, to every soldier a part.”

Our Lord had again been stripped of His garments before He was crucified, renewing the pain of His wounds, and now He hangs naked on the cross before the people.

What an agony to Him, the model of perfect virginal modesty!

Tradition says our Lady covered Him a little with her inner veil of linen, and this relic is jealously preserved in Rome.

Do you envy her? Listen to His words, “Naked, and you covered Me.”

III.

“And also His coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said then one to

another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it."

We may easily believe the tradition that our Lady's hands had woven this seamless robe, the very touch of which had worked miracles.

It is the type of that Church which can never be cut or broken, but must remain ever one.

Will you not strive in spirit to touch that robe, stained by the Precious Blood, woven by the hands of Mary? Will you not say, "If I shall but touch His garment I shall be healed of my sins;" and entreat Him to say unto you, "Go in peace, and be whole of thy disease"?

MARCH 26th.

The Words of our Lord on the Cross.

I.

"And Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The first thought of our Lord on the

cross was not for His dear Mother, or for any that loved Him, but for His murderers.

The mercy of His Heart can never be exhausted.

How different from us; how hard we find it to forgive even trifling injuries, even slights. How hard we are upon others.

Oh, ask grace from your Saviour, dying and forgiving, to soften your heart, and make you, who so need mercy for yourself, to have great compassion for others.

II.

“And Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise.”

The second thought of Jesus was for a sinner, but a sinner who had repented. One of the robbers crucified with Him was sorry at last, and cried out, “Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom.”

Mighty virtue had gone forth from the cross, and made this man full of

faith, full of confidence in the divine mercy, and from the cross he became a saint, and he has left us a prayer for evermore by which to appeal to our Lord, "Lord, remember me."

Dearest Lord, do not forget Thy last, Thy least, Thy unworthiest creature.

III.

"Woman, behold thy son. Behold thy Mother."

And then He thought of His faithful ones, of His Church left desolate, and so He gave us a Mother, His own, His immaculate, His virgin Mother. Her love had comforted Him, so He gave that love to comfort us.

And He gave us to her, the sinners for the sinless, the guilty for the innocent; and she said again in her Heart, "Be it done to me according to Thy word," and she took us all for ever into her broken Heart. Live in that Heart.

MARCH 27th.

The Words of our Lord on the Cross.—

Continued.

I.

“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”

At last He turns to His own sufferings; but only then for our sakes, to teach us how He suffered, that we might be patient in our turn.

The hardest of all trials is spiritual desolation, and especially when allied to bodily weakness and suffering.

So our Lord shows as He drank this cup to the dregs. He felt the full weight of the anger of His heavenly Father for the sins that He bore for us.

II.

“I thirst.”

His murderers, hearing these words, offered Him vinegar, to make Him suffer more. But we know He meant far more than the torturing thirst produced

by such a death-agony as His. He was expressing the terrible disappointment of His soul. After all, so many were lost, so many would reject His grace, and He longed after them, He thirsted for souls.

Will you not strive to satisfy Him? Will you only give Him vinegar, by your cold indifference, your hardness to others, your repugnance to make sacrifices to win souls to Him?

III.

“Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”

The end was very near; soon there would be no more that men could do to Him; and He who has taught us how to live, how to suffer, and how to forgive, now teaches us how to die,—with perfect confidence to give ourselves up into our Father’s hands, to commend ourselves to Him, sure of His love, sure of His goodness.

“Into Thy hands I commend my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, the God of truth.”

MARCH 28th.**Our Lord's Death.****I.**

"It is consummated."

The last words of Jesus. How we delight to linger on the last words of those we love.

Listen, then, well to the last words of your King and your Master. "It is consummated." I have finished My work. I have paid the mighty debt. Henceforth the kingdom of heaven is open to all believers.

Nothing but your own will can now hinder your salvation. The decree that was against us has been taken out of the way, fastened to the cross.

II.

"Bowing His Head."

The last mute sign of His entire submission; the perfect expression of His adoration for the divine majesty.

"He humbled Himself, becoming obe-

dient unto death." He acknowledged that life was the gift of God, and He gave up that human life of His in sacrifice, and consented to pass through the gates of death.

What do you sacrifice to the love of Jesus? Do you bow your will to His?

III.

"He gave up the ghost."

He was gone; the thirty-three years were over.

God had submitted to the humiliation of death to atone for our sins, and to set us an example to the very last.

"When as yet we were sinners, Christ died for us."

You must certainly die, and follow your Lord through the gates of the tomb.

Will you not now make death easy by dying to self-love, by sacrificing all that keeps your soul from God, so that you may live for ever in Him?

MARCH 29th.**The Piercing of the Heart of Jesus.****I.**

“One of the soldiers opened His side with a spear.”

And thus was opened to us the Sacred Heart, the cleft in the rock where we may hide and shelter ourselves. This piercing took place that we might see more plainly how our Lord loves us.

Will you not give Him back some love? Will you not place all your trust in that pierced Heart?

II.

“And immediately there came out blood and water.”

From that wounded Side sprang the Church, the Bride of Christ, with her mighty sacraments, to purify, heal, and nourish the souls of men.

Can you ever distrust Him again when you see all He has done for you? He has spared you nothing. The very last

drop of His Blood is yours. What will you do for Him in return?

III.

“They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

The crowd that had assembled on Calvary was fast melting away, for the spectacle was over, the deed was wrought. But one day they shall all see again the Form they have been watching.

And you, if now you neglect His call, and do not follow His precepts, derive no fruit from His death, what will you do when you look upon Him in the hour of judgment? But rather will you not consecrate yourself anew to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to live and die in that holy service?

MARCH 30th.

The Taking Down from the Cross.

I.

“Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counsellor, who was also himself looking for

the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus."

This man showed his devotion by his courage; he probably risked his life by his boldness. He succeeded, and has left his name to be venerated by all the ages as they pass.

Do you ever have to beg for the Body of Jesus, to go through pain and difficulties to obtain It? Are you ever tempted to give up the effort as too hard upon you?

III.

"And Pilate permitted him. He came, therefore, and took away the Body of Jesus."

These wonderful words, are they not often, so often, true of you? You take away the Body of Jesus, yea, and His soul and divinity also. Do you treat Him with loving reverence?

Try to console Him for the pains He has suffered, as Joseph strove by an honourable burial to repair a little the insults He had received from His people.

III.

"And Joseph, buying fine linen, and taking Him down."

Surely Joseph laid Him in His Mother's arms.

Kneel by her side and look upon those wounds; kiss the nails as they are drawn out of the white Flesh; learn that we must wait the hour when God shall take away the nails that bind us to our crosses.

Kiss those beautiful Feet which Magdalene is washing with her tears. Gaze on the dead Face of Jesus, so calm in its repose, and resolve that you will live only for His faithful service.

MARCH 31st.

The Burial of Jesus.

I.

"They took therefore the Body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices."

And our Lord humbled Himself even

to this, to become an inanimate corpse, which we have to hide from our gaze.

Adore that Body, cold in death; resolve that you will be obedient to His will, you will no longer murmur if you have no choice of your own in what you do.

II.

“And there was in the place where He was crucified a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein no man yet had been laid.”

Nature shrinks from the tomb. Thus our dear Lord chose to sanctify it by His presence.

We weep beside our dead, and we lay them in the grave with Him. We think of our own departure, and we remember He has gone before, and so the grave loses its sting.

And when lowly obedience is hard for us, let us kneel in spirit by that tomb.

III.

“There, therefore, by reason of the trasceve of the Jews, they laid Jesus,

because the sepulchre was nigh at hand. And he rolled a stone to the door of the sepulchre."

There was hardly time to put our Lord into His tomb, because the Sabbath was beginning, and the law had to be kept.

Learn how we should leave God for God, leave His actual presence to do His work.

How our Lady and the Magdalene must have longed to have kept vigil by the tomb. But His will was dearer to them than His presence.

Kneel, then, by His tomb, and bury your heart there, and say, "O Love, O Love, make me cling to Thy wounds so closely that I may make them mine own, and inseparable from me. May I carry them each one in my heart; may I have them ever before my eyes. Print, Lord, with Thy Precious Blood the form of these loving wounds in the very depths of my soul, that their memory may continually renew in me my grief for having offended Thee, and the flames of Thy holy love."

PALM SUNDAY.*

I.

"They brought the colt to Jesus: and they lay their garments on him, and He sat upon him."

Even when He allowed the people to honour Him He would keep to His humble, simple way, and ride upon an ass, a colt.

And does not that colt, never yet accustomed to the yoke, represent your strong self-will, which so often rebels against God's will, and those who represent Him to you? Bend, then, that will before our dear Lord.

II.

"And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way."

It was an outburst of love and devotion; they did all they could to honour Him.

* For those who may wish to make the Meditation on Palm Sunday on the mystery of the day, the following Meditation is given:

Is this the case with you? You may have little to give, only poor gifts to offer; but do you give all you *can*?

III.

"Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. And when He was come into Jerusalem the whole city was moved, saying: Who is this? And the people said: This is Jesus."

How often does not our Lord come to you? Then is your whole being moved by the visit?

Do you say, "Who is this that is coming to me? Jesus, my Lord and my King?" Does He come to triumph in your heart? Are your thoughts consecrated to Him, like flowers to strew His path?

Let Him enter as a conqueror, to subdue all that is evil in you, and to reign over you with glory.

Pray that He may reign over others. Say often that richly-indulged prayer, "Thy kingdom come."

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH.

I.

“A just man.”

In these few words the picture of a perfect being is placed before us. Just towards God, giving Him all that a creature should give to its Maker and its King; just towards men, loving them better than himself, keeping the laws of God concerning them.

How few in this world are like St. Joseph; how few are *just* towards God and their fellow-creatures.

II.

“The husband of Mary.”

St. Joseph was highly favoured, since we may say he was called to co-operate in the redemption of the world. He was to guard the spotless Virgin, from whom should come forth the Saviour.

Think of the love of Mary for Joseph, and his for her, and strive to love him who was so dear to your Mother.

III.

“The husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus.”

St. Joseph, then, was the foster-father of Jesus. No creature has ever been made so like the heavenly Father as he who was suffered to appear to men as the father of Jesus, and had to fulfil the office of a father, caring for Him, protecting Him, labouring for His support. We can never understand how exceedingly dear he is to the Heart of Jesus.

Take him for your father who was the foster-father of Jesus, and learn from him what is a devoted love for our Lord, to care for His interests, to protect His glory, to labour for His love.

MARCH 25th.

The Feast of the Incarnation.

I.

“The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth.”

Think what the Most Blessed Trinity resolves to do. “Let Us redeem man.”

How our sweet Lady's purity and gentleness attracts the eyes and the love of God, so that she was chosen out of thousands to be the means of God's mercy to the world !

O that I too, by meekness and cleanness of heart, could draw God's eyes on me. O that I might become a means to make others good and happy. O that I might be an image of Mary.

II.

"To a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the Virgin's name was Mary."

Think of the joy of the great Archangel when he was called to the foot of God's throne to receive the message he was to bear from heaven to earth. Yet it was not his redemption, but ours, to save poor mean creatures so far below him. Do I feel joy in the good of others, even of the meanest ?

How all the Angels honour him as he passes through them on his way, and there is joy in heaven.

If it were not for selfishness there

would be more joy even on earth. The world, when it had forgotten God, became all selfish, and by becoming selfish became also miserable.

It is the same with me. My heart must be either faithful to God, by the thoughts of Jesus Christ, or a slave to self, by forgetting Him.

What shall I resolve? what wish for? try to be? If I begin to think often of Jesus Christ, to know Him, and to love Him, however slowly, I am certain to begin at the same time to see that selfishness is bad. This is eternal life,

III.

“And the angel being come in, said to her: Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.”

Hear the sweet words, Ave Maria, the first time they are uttered on earth. Think what a treasure was given to us, even in those words. Are they a treasure to you?

But above all, think when our Blessed Lady yielded her consent, what a wondrous work of bliss was done at that

moment, the happiest moment the world shall ever know. Then Jesus Christ was given to us, and how also with Him hath He not given us all things? Then our God became in very truth our Brother: then Mary our Mother; then were the tears wiped away from our eyes, and our reproach was taken away, and the heaven of heavens was opened to us, and He who should show us the way, and feed us on our dreary road, and lift and cleanse us when we fall, and be not only our Saviour, but our Friend, our Lover, and our All,—He at last was by our side.

At the first beat of His Sacred Heart all the world was changed, for the Sun was risen after the long night, and the morning was come at last which should know night no more.

Do I realize what Jesus Christ is to me, how He is indeed all my happiness? Shall I not, then, exult in the day on which He is given to me? Shall I not seek to make Him the centre of my life here, on whose bosom I shall rest for ever?

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

APRIL.

CONTENTS FOR APRIL.

—105—

DAY.	PAGE
1. Our Lord's Resurrection ...	209
2. The Glorious Body of Jesus Christ...	212
3. Circumstances of our Lord's Resurrection	214
4. The Holy Women at the Sepulchre ..	216
5. St. Peter and St. John at the Sepulchre...	218
6. The Magdalene at the Sepulchre ...	220
7. Our Lord Appears to the Magdalene ...	222
8. The same, continued ...	224
9. Our Lord Appears to the Holy Women...	226
10. Our Lord Appears to St. Peter ...	228
11. Emmaus	230
12. The same, continued ...	232
13. The same, continued ...	234
14. Our Lord comes to His Apostles ...	237
15. Our Lord eats with His Apostles ...	239
16. The power given to the Apostles ...	241
17. Our Lord and St. Thomas ...	243
18. The same, continued ...	245
19. Our Lord on the shore of Tiberias ...	247
20. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes...	249
21. The same, continued ...	251
22. Our Lord's Charge to St. Peter ...	253
23. Prediction concerning St. Peter ...	256
24. Our Lord's Appearance in Galilee ...	258
25. The Mission of the Apostles ...	260
26. The same, continued ...	262
27. Our Lord's Departure from Earth ...	264
28. The same, continued ...	266
29. Our Lord's Promises ...	268
30. The same, continued ...	270

SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR APRIL.

APRIL 1st.—EASTER DAY.

Our Lord's Resurrection.

I.

“And they departing, made the sepulchre sure, with guards, sealing the stone.”

While the Divine Body rested in the tomb, the Soul of Jesus, united to His Divinity, went into hell, or limbo, where tarried the souls of the just who had passed from earth.

Long and patient had been their watching for redemption.

Now behold their joy and triumph, for the kingdom of heaven is opened to them.

II.

"And in the end of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week."

It is supposed our Lord rose from the dead at midnight. His soul re-entered His body, now become immortal and impassible, and passed through the gates of the tomb, for no earthly barrier could now arrest His progress; and, surrounded by angels and saints, went to salute His holy Mother.

Share the joy of your Mother, when she beholds the glory of her Son.

Did she not suffer more than any one? Is it not just she should be the first to be consoled? "Weeping she hath wept in the night, and her tears are upon her cheeks."

Now He has wiped away those tears, and she has "reaped in joy."

III.

"And many bodies of the saints that had slept, arose; and coming out of the

tombs after His resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many."

We may piously believe that St. Joseph was among this happy number, and that he went with our Lord to salute our Lady.

Who can express the joy of those three hearts, once more united! It was the foretaste of the bliss that was in a few more years to begin for ever, when our Lady should have finished her work on earth.

And so for you, if you be but faithful, your eternal Easter shall dawn. Those long parted here shall meet again, and the sorrows of earth seem as one brief moment when you shall enter into the joy of your Lord.

APRIL 2nd.**The Glorious Body of Jesus Christ.****I.**

"He is not here: He is risen, as He said."

Contemplate the exceeding beauty of our risen Lord. His body is resplendent with the light of the Divine Majesty. It can never again feel pain or suffering; it can never die.

And such is the body that you will one day possess, if you will follow our Lord's steps. If you share His sufferings and humiliations, you shall also share His glory.

II.

"Behold the place where they laid Him."

They laid Him there but three short days before, apparently the defeated one, done to death at last. And He has risen again the conqueror. He can go

where He lists; He is no longer bound by space.

He is now to reign for ever, and His sepulchre, the poor tomb into which they thrust His body in haste, is to become glorious,—a shrine where pilgrims through all the long ages shall worship.

Adore your King in His majesty, conquering death.

III.

“Why seek you the living among the dead?”

Let us strive, then, to begin here the heavenly life of our future, and not to trouble ourselves about those things that perish with time.

Sanctifying grace makes our souls immortal. If you avoid sin certainly you already begin your eternal happiness.

Mortification in a certain sense makes us triumph over the weakness and infirmities of our bodies; we rise above them.

Purity brings divine light, and re-

flects, even in these poor tabernacles of clay, a ray of the glory to come.

Recollection and vigilance enable us to overcome obstacles, and advance rapidly in the way of perfection.

Do you thus rise with Jesus ?

APRIL 3rd.

Circumstances of the Resurrection of our Lord.

I.

“And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven; and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it.”

Our Lord sent an angel to roll away the stone and to break the seals.

Never, then, fear He will let adverse circumstances overwhelm you. We often meet with trials which seem to us insurmountable. If they really are so, God will remove them. His angels are ever near, ready to obey His will.

II.

“And his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow; and for fear of him the guards were struck with terror.”

When God sends His angels to sinners, they are very terrible; but when they come to His faithful ones, they console and help them. To the holy women this angel appears “as a young man clothed with a white robe.”

Render, then, to your Lord and your God, your loving, reverent homage.

III.

“And became as dead men.”

If the sight of an angel could have such an effect, what will it be when sinners see our Lord as their Judge?

Thank that good and gracious Lord who has let you learn in this life how good and merciful He is, that you may not have to fear Him hereafter.

Resolve to let your pride and self-love lie dead at His feet when you

adore Him: and often say, "My sweetest Jesus, be to me, not a Judge, but a Saviour."

APRIL 4th.

The Holy Women at the Sepulchre.

I.

"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, brought sweet spices, that coming they might anoint Jesus."

While it was yet dark these loving souls went on their way, anxious to do all they could, however little, to honour their Lord.

Are you eager to hasten to meditation in the early morning? Do you cheerfully encounter difficulties in the way of prayer? Do you bring the sweet spice of sacrifice to our Lord?

II.

"And looking, they saw the stone

rolled back. For it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe; and they were astonished."

The courage and confidence of the holy women was rewarded. And so, if you persevere through the darkness of life in following our Lord, you will meet angels in the way, sometimes in human forms, who will help you on, strengthen your faith, restore your love, increase your charity.

III.

"And he said to them: Be not affrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen: He is not here."

The time of their fear and trouble was over; the hour of joy and renewed hope had come for them; their mourning was turned into joy.

But even now you are more blest than they. No angel will say to you, "He is not here;" for you have Him in the tabernacle.

Give Him, then, your heart's best gratitude for thus dwelling with you.

APRIL 5th.

St. Peter and St. John at the Sepulchre.

I.

"She ran, therefore, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith to them : They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."

The vehement love of the Magdalene made her fly from the empty tomb, to tell those whom she knew would help her to find the Lord's body.

Are you eager in seeking for spiritual help, to enable you to become more united to Jesus ?

II.

"Peter, therefore, went out, and that other disciple ; and they came to the

sepulchre. And they both did run together: and that other disciple out-ran Peter, and came first to the sepulchre."

See, with what eager love the two apostles flew to the spot at the first sound of the news; St. Peter burning to make up for his fault.

Does your contrition produce this fruit in you, making you eager and foremost in reparation?

III.

"And when he stooped down he saw the linen cloths lying: but yet he went not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen cloths lying. Then that other disciple also went in, and he saw and believed."

St. John would not enter first, by deference for St. Peter, who was his superior.

Do you always show great respect to those who are set over you?

The sepulchre, then, was opened to us all by the head of the Church. There

you should lay down for ever fear and cowardice.

“And the napkin that had been about His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but apart, wrapt up into one place.”

As the angels thus reverently folded the linen that had covered the Divine Face, learn with what respect you should treat all that belongs to the service of the altar, where abides Jesus in His Sacrament.

APRIL 6th.

The Magdalene at the Sepulchre.

I.

“So the disciples went away again to their home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping: whilst she was then weeping, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre.”

St. Mary Magdalene could not bear to leave the place where her Lord had been. Anxiously she scanned the tokens of His recent presence there, and mean-

while her tears were falling fast. She "sought Him whom her soul loved, she sought and found Him not."

When you lost Jesus by sin were you inconsolable till you found Him again?

II.

"And she saw two angels in white, sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid."

God always sends us help in trouble, but not always in the form in which we wish it to come.

"They say to her: Woman, why weepest thou?"

How often these words could be addressed to you! Why are you mourning and fretting? Is it because the interests of Jesus are attacked, or that you fear to have displeased Him; or is it not rather for some paltry earthly loss or trial that you weep?

III.

"She saith to them: Because they

have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

She can only call Him by one name, "my Lord," so utterly was He her one thought, her only Love.

"Her soul," says Origen, "lived more in Jesus than in herself."

Even angels could neither terrify, attract, or comfort her. She was the model of the devoted, unselfish love of a soul for Him who so desires our love.

Compare your love for Him with this.

APRIL 7th.

Our Lord appears to the Magdalene.

I.

"When she had said these words, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing: and she knew not that it was Jesus."

And thus it often pleases our dear Lord to hide His visible presence from those He loves the best, to increase their merit and their glory.

And how often do we meet Jesus and know Him not ? In some saint we think an ordinary person, in some poor being whom we neglect, in some sacrifice we shrink from, Jesus is near us and we know it not.

II.

“ Jesus saith to her : Woman, why weepest thou ? whom seekest thou ? ”

When our Lord asks a question He wants us to speak to Him as our Friend and our Brother, as well as our God. We should confide everything to Him.

“ She, thinking it was the gardener, saith to Him : Sir, if Thou hast taken Him away, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. ”

What mighty love filled the heart of Magdalene ! Nothing seemed too hard for her if it was for Jesus.

And you, what sacrifices do you make to worthily receive the Body and Blood of Jesus ?

III.

“ Jesus saith to her : Mary. ”

Perhaps there is nothing in the Gos-

pel which teaches us better than this one word the infinite tenderness of the Sacred Heart.

Try to hear in spirit the exceeding sweetness of His voice as He utters the name of His poor servant, whose sorrow He thus turns into joy. Long for the time when that same voice shall pronounce your name. He knows it well; it is "graven in His hands."

Fall down, then, at His feet, as did the Magdalene, and vow your heart's best service to Him as you say, "*Master*, my Lord and my King."

APRIL 8th.

Our Lord appears to the Magdalene.—

Continued.

I.

"She, turning, saith to Him: Rabboni, (that is to say, Master). Jesus saith to her: Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father."

We can well believe that Magdalene fell down to embrace those feet which she had so often kissed before. But our dear Lord, in gentle words, teaches her that the bliss of heaven is not yet hers.

He is in His glorified body ; she was still burdened with our dying nature.

Not yet, He says to her and to you. Not yet; wait but a little time.

II.

“But go to My brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and your God.”

Never can you meditate enough on these words of exceeding tenderness, revealing to us the depths of the loving Heart of Jesus. Not one thought of His own happiness unless we share it with Him. All He has won by His Passion is for us.

Does not your heart melt with love in return ?

III.

“Mary Magdalene cometh, telling the disciples: I have seen the Lord, and these things He said to me.”

The Magdalene, prompt in obedience, as all are who love truly, left the sweet presence of her Master to do His will. She was the apostle of the resurrection.

Your merit before God does not consist in having consolations, but in your patience, submission, obedience, and humility.

Be ever ready to leave God for God, to sacrifice your own spiritual comfort to help others.

APRIL 9th.

Our Lord appears to the Holy Women.

I.

“And they went out quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, running to tell His disciples.”

They were fervent in God’s service, and full of thought for others; they wanted the disciples, whom they knew to be cast down in sorrow, to hear the news which filled their hearts with joy

in the midst of their fear and bewilderment.

Do you always wish others to share the favours you receive ?

II.

“ And behold Jesus met them, saying: All hail. But they came up, and took hold of His feet, and worshipped Him.”

Imagine if you can the joy of those faithful, simple hearts, when they heard that beloved voice salute them.

Fall down in spirit with them at His feet. Take hold of Him by your earnest desire to know, to love, and to serve Him.

III.

“ Then Jesus said to them: Be not afraid.”

Do not lose time in vain discussions with yourself. Put your whole confidence in Him who has died and risen again for you.

Dwell on the joyful thought that everywhere in life you can meet our Lord and hear His voice, if you are fervent and active in His service.

This sweet greeting was given to those who "ere the sun had risen" came to honour the Lord.

APRIL 10th.

Our Lord appears to St. Peter.

I.

"But Peter went away, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass."

Did not the words of his Master, who had foretold all this, come clearly before his mind? Did it not increase the sorrow and the shame he felt at having lost his courage and confidence on the terrible night so lately passed?

II.

"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon."

The heart of St. Peter must have been sad in the midst of the universal joy. How, thought he, could he ever meet again the Master he had so be-

trayed? He who had so boasted of his fidelity, and so miserably fallen, and then:—we know not how Jesus came, or what He said, but Peter knew he was fully, entirely forgiven.

Does not our Lord say to you: “Fear not; it is *I* who pardon you”?

III.

“And hath appeared unto Simon.”

No one was with St. Peter when our dear Lord came. He spared him all humiliation before his brethren.

Thus does He restore to you, in the secrecy of the sacrament of penance, the grace that you have lost.

The apostles still recognized St. Peter as the head of the Church. They were sure the Lord had risen when He had “appeared to Peter.”

Do you ever despise those who are set over you because you see their defects and weakness?

Ask our Lord to teach you true humility.

APRIL 11th.

Emmaus.

I.

“And behold two of them went that same day to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened.”

We see how truly the minds of the disciples were taken up with our Lord. They could not talk of anything else.

Are His interests dearer to you than aught else? Do you like to speak and think about Him?

II.

“And it came to pass that while they talked and reasoned with one another, Jesus Himself also drew near, and went with them.”

But their eyes were held that they should not know Him.

Do you wish to be in our Lord's company?

Never say a word you would not say in His visible presence.

How often our Lord appears to us, and we know Him not. He came to us in such a cross, or under such a human form, and we did not see Him.

Pray that He may be the companion of your thoughts, your actions, your journeys, and your life.

III.

“And He said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another, as you walk, and are sad?”

If your Lord were to come to you in the midst of conversation, and say, “Of what are you speaking? what is the favourite matter of your conversation?” could you sincerely answer, “Of Thee, O my Jesus”?

And if He said, “Why are you sad?” can you answer, “Because I have lost Thee, because Thy cause seems to be defeated on this earth;” or will it not rather be from some selfish motive?

Answer His question, however; and by pouring your griefs into the Hear

of Jesus you will learn to look on them as He wishes you should.

APRIL 12th.

Emmaus.—*Continued.*

I.

“And the one whose name was Cleophas answering, said to Him : Art Thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days ?”

Can you ever say that our Lord is a stranger to you ? that He does not know what is passing within you, in the city of your soul ?

Are you living estranged from Him, surrounded by cares and interests in which He has no part ?

II.

“And He said to them: What things ? and they said: Concerning Jesus of

Nazareth.....We hoped that it was He who should have redeemed Israel."

Here we see the wound of these hearts revealed. They were disappointed that our Lord had not visibly triumphed over His enemies.

How true a picture of you as you tread the difficult road of life. You cannot understand why such an obstacle is allowed to arise; why you should be thus harassed and tempted; or if you could only have such a desire you would get on more rapidly.

III.

"Then He said to them: O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?"

Do you not merit this reproach from our Lord? Are you not very slow to take His teaching into your heart? Are you not foolish in clinging to earthly hopes, in forming your own plans? Is not the lesson of our Lord's Passion often disregarded?

Are you wise enough to rejoice in infirmities, in bodily illness, in mental trouble, calumny, poverty, temptations?

Ask Him who comes to you so often in Holy Communion, bearing the marks of His wounds, to give you the true wisdom and intelligence that you lack.

APRIL 13th.

Emmaus.—*Continued.*

I.

“And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going; and He made as though He would go farther.”

How completely our dear Lord makes Himself one with us, feigning to withdraw His favour only to excite our faith and our love.

“But they constrained Him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent.”

Here is one of the prayers that are immortal, that supply the needs of every

one in whatever time or circumstances his lot be cast.

"Stay with me, Lord." Do not forsake me, O my good Master.

"It is towards evening." Except Thou guide me I must perish in the shadows.

"The day is far spent." I have lost so much time. Who knows how soon life's day shall be over? "Stay with me, Lord."

II.

"And He went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst He was at table with them He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him."

And until this day, and until time shall end, our merciful Lord is ever working the same miracle. When we come to His table, and when He gives us the Bread of Life, then we cannot but know Him, for Holy Church has taught us what this Bread broken for us signifies.

“And He vanished out of their sight.”

His sacramental visits are but short. All joy is passing in this poor life of ours. Here we must live by faith, not by sight.

III.

“And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us whilst He was speaking in the way, and opened to us the scriptures?”

Would you have this heavenly fire in your heart, and increase in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ? Study the mystery of the cross.

“And they rose up at the same hour, and went back to Jerusalem.”

They were not afraid to retrace their steps in the dark; they panted too much with desire to be again actively employed in the service of their King.

Pray that the fruit of your communions may be an ardent zeal for souls, an entire devotion to Jesus Christ.

APRIL 14th.

Our Lord comes to His Apostles.

I.

“Jesus stood in the midst of them, and saith to them: Peace be to you; it is I, fear not.”

The one great treasure our Lord desires to give us on earth is peace; that true peace, founded on distrust of self, and boundless confidence in Him.

Whatever your troubles, temptations, and trials may be, you can always have peace if you so will. You can always hear our Lord saying, “It is I, fear not.”

II.

“But they being troubled and afrighted, supposed that they saw a spirit.”

How often have you not looked on divine visits and inspirations as illusions? God could not be asking this of you; it is not His voice, you thought.

And has He not said to you, "Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" thoughts of distrust of our Lord, of impatience of His yoke? "See My hands and My feet, that it is I myself; feel and see."

Did not the thought of His Passion calm and enlighten you?

"He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord."

And thus they saw that He would wear for ever the marks of the wounds He had received for us, and that those wounds are to be the source of our hope, joy, and thanksgiving.

Have you true spiritual joy? Its possession depends mainly on yourself.

Many desire it, few take the means to attain or to preserve it.

Ask for this grace.

APRIL 15th.

Our Lord eats with His Apostles.

I.

"But while they yet believed not, and wondered for joy, He said: Have you here anything to eat?"

How like a traveller, supposed to be lost, coming back to his home.

Thus did our Lord show His delight at being once more among His own.

II.

"And they offered Him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honeycomb."

What happiness it must have been to them to set this simple fare before Him.

But you can share this joy. "I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat." These words sound in our ears throughout the ages.

To help others, to give what you possess, to feed the hungry in body by

alms, the hungry in soul by example and instruction, is to feed the Lord.

III.

“And when He had eaten before them, taking the remains, He gave to them.”

We must share the same food as our King if we would be with Him in eternity. Like Him, you must be simple and mortified in your taste, poor in your desires, submissive in your will.

He has won for us eternal life. The worst and the bitterest part He has taken for Himself; but we must take the remains: we must suffer, or we cannot be sanctified.

Ask for grace to understand this truth.

APRIL 16th.

The power given to the Apostles.

I.

“And He said to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you.”

The apostles were to be the messengers of peace and charity as well as the teachers of truth. They were to be ready, after their Lord's example, to give themselves for those to whom they were sent.

Are you trying to do all you can to save the souls of others? Does the peace of Christ go with you wherever you are?

II.

“When He had said this He breathed on them, and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

And that divine breath imparted to the apostles some of the power and love of the Sacred Heart, that they might

continue on earth the work of our redemption.

You can never do good to souls unless you are filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ, manifesting His patience, sweetness, and humility.

III.

“Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose you shall retain they are retained.”

And thus our gracious Lord instituted the sacrament of penance, and gave to men a power not bestowed on angels. He gave it for the consolation of His people, that they might never be overwhelmed by the sense of their own sins, but have a remedy close at hand.

How do you use this precious means of grace? Is it indeed to you a salutary medicine, gradually working the cure of your spiritual diseases?

Examine and see if there is anything here to amend, and pray for grace well to profit by this sacrament of tender mercy.

APRIL 17th.

Our Lord and St. Thomas.

I.

"Now Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came."

See what a loss St. Thomas had, because he went his own way, thinking all was lost.

Have a horror of singularity even in piety, and remember the graces promised to those who are "gathered together" in prayer.

II.

"The other disciples, therefore, said to him: We have seen the Lord."

But St. Thomas would not believe them. He was obstinate in his own opinion.

Is this great fault one of yours? Do you find much difficulty in yielding your ideas and your judgment to those who are set over you by God?

If so, see how much interior grace and light you lose.

III.

“But he said to them: Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

How often have you imitated the rash presumption of this apostle? Unless God will bring about such a result, unless He will send a certain help in our way, at our time, you will not believe in His loving-kindness, you will not submit to His will.

Ask pardon of our Lord for all your distrust in Him.

APRIL 18th.

Our Lord and St. Thomas.—*Continued.*

I.

“And after eight days.”

No doubt this week had been a most painful one to St. Thomas; conscience bitterly reproached him for his intemperate words.

“His disciples were again within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, and He saith to Thomas: Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not incredulous, but faithful.”

What wonderful patience does our dear Lord have with us! How often does He not say these words to you: “See these hands pierced for you”? Come and seek refuge in that Heart ever open for you.

II.

“Thomas answered and said to Him :
My Lord and my God.”

Sorrow and love so filled his heart he
could say no more.

Do you often repeat those words
when your sins are forgiven, when your
soul is fed with Divine Food ? Do you
cry out, in adoring, contrite love, “ My
Lord and my God ” ?

III.

“ Jesus saith to him : Because thou
hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast be-
lieved : blessed are they that have not
seen and have believed.”

These words should awaken in your
soul the deepest gratitude. You are
among this happy number. God has
presented you with His grace and light,
but how much more of this beatitude
can you not gain ?

Despise the things of earth that are
seen ; live in the thought of the unseen
life, of eternity ; live the life of faith in
all things, great and small.

APRIL 19th.

Our Lord on the Shore of Tiberias.

I.

“There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples. Simon Peter saith to them: I go a fishing. They say to him: We also come with thee.”

See how simply the apostles went back to their usual occupations; how they worked together in fraternal charity.

Is your conduct like theirs? Do you work well and peacefully with others?

II.

“And they went forth and entered into a ship: and that night they caught nothing.”

The life of the apostles was a laborious one, full of lessons of patience and self-denial.

In the spiritual life we often labour

and seem to make no progress ; all seems dark around us. Then is the time for patient perseverance in the path of duty.

III.

“But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore : yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.”

Our Lord is never far away. He is always watching His own. In the early morning He stands before us, offering Himself as the one availing sacrifice to His Father.

How often you know Him not. You are full of distractions and cares, occupied with your sorrows and ill success, and you see but very dimly who is close by you.

Pray for and learn spiritual discernment.

APRIL 20th.

The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

I.

“And Jesus said to them: Children, have you any meat? They answered Him: No.”

Are you not often answering in the same way? Have you anything of your own? Does not all come from God, and above all else that Divine Meat in whose strength you pass through the desert of this life?

II.

“He saith to them: Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find.”

Choose the side on which lies the cross, and you shall find your labours succeed.

“They cast therefore: and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”

Thus does our Lord reward obedience

Thus can we heap up merits before Him by doing His will.

"That disciple, therefore, whom Jesus loved said to Peter: It is the Lord."

Love is quick-sighted and watchful.

Ask grace that you may be able to say, "It is the Lord," in all the means He sends for your sanctification.

III.

"Simon Peter, when he heard that it was the Lord, girded his coat about him (for he was naked,) and cast himself into the sea."

Among the Jews the long upper robe was laid aside for rough work. St. Peter, in loving reverence, would not appear thus before his Master, and his impetuous desire to show Him homage could brook no delay.

Is this like your preparation for Holy Communion? Do you strive to clothe yourself with humility and charity? Do you long for the moment when you shall meet the Lord and be fed by Him?

APRIL 21st.

The Miraculous Draught of Fishes,—*Continued.*

I.

“As soon, then, as they came to land, they saw hot coals lying, and a fish laid thereon, and bread.”

It is a wonderful lesson! Our Lord performing the lowliest offices with His own hands—lighting a fire to warm the shivering weary Apostles, and providing their breakfast for them.

Can you then believe that He does not watch over every detail of your life; that anything is too little for Him?

II.

“Jesus saith to them: Come and dine.”

These loving words are so often addressed to you. Does not our Lord mercifully provide for all your wants?

“And none of them who wer

meat durst ask Him: Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord."

And thus should you accept your lot from His hand, without any distrustful questions, doubts, or fears.

III.

"And Jesus cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish in like manner."

Our Lord then knows well all we have to suffer. Fatigue, hunger, poverty: He weighs them all. He takes care of you day by day. He will never let the burden be too great. He will provide for your bodily wants; and far more for the wants of your soul.

Lift up your heart. The sea of life, with all its deceptions, will soon be passed, and He is waiting for you on the eternal shore.

APRIL 22nd.

Our Lord's Charge to St. Peter.

I.

"When, therefore, they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed My lambs."

See how humbly St. Peter answers: his days of boasting are passed and gone.

Are you more humble because of your faults? And can you answer the question that our Lord is certainly addressing to you: "Lovest thou Me." Can you say, "Yea, Lord"? And do you try, in your degree, to feed His lambs, to take care of His little ones, His poor, His suffering members?

II.

"He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me? He saith to

Him : Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him : Feed My lambs."

Happy is the soul who can answer as St. Peter did ; who is frank with God and with itself ; who can say : " Lord, THOU KNOWEST."

Can you say this ? And can you say that you love God more than any creature or thing ? more than yourself ?

Do you thank that gracious Lord for making you a lamb in His fold ; for giving you His Vicar and His priesthood to watch over you ?

III.

"He saith to him the third time : Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me ? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time : Lovest thou Me ? And he said to Him : Lord, Thou knowest all things : Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him : Feed My sheep."

You, too, would be sorrowful if you thought our Lord doubted your love.

Do you ever think of the sorrow you give Him by mistrusting *His love* for you? By thinking He has not forgotten your denials of Him; your falls, not three-fold only, but alas! far more numerous?

See how our Lord loves reparation. He allows St. Peter publicly to affirm his love three times, in order to repair his three denials. See, then, the profit that you can draw even from your past sins; their memory should make you love our Lord more ardently, more strongly and generously; should make you ready for sacrifices; ready to "feed His sheep" by your holy example and devoted service.

Then you can say, lying low before Him: "Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee."

APRIL 23rd.**Prediction concerning St. Peter.****I.**

“Amen, amen, I say to thee: When thou wast younger thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not.”

To show His apostle, now so truly humble, how entirely he was trusted again, our Lord foretold his future, and foreshadowed that heroic act of love which was to end his long life,—his death by crucifixion with his head downwards.

“He saith to him: Follow Me.”

And these words are said to you. Are you really following Jesus Christ by leading a crucified life?

II.

“Peter, turning about, saw that dis-

ciple whom Jesus loved, following, who leaned on His breast at the supper. Him, therefore, when Peter had seen, he saith to Jesus; Lord, and what shall this man do?"

A strong affection existed between these two apostles, and St. Peter, always over-eager, desired to know if in the future their lives should be linked together.

Are you anxious that those who labour with you should rise to high perfection, and gain great rewards? Are you unselfish about spiritual favours?

III.

"Jesus saith to him: So I will have him to remain till I come; what is it to thee? Follow thou Me."

Do not seek to know the secrets of Divine Providence. Leave in your Lord's loving care your future, and the future of those dear to you. You do not love them with a tithe of His love for them. And above all, avoid curio-

sity and observation of the defects of others.

Hear our Lord saying, "What is it to thee? Follow thou Me." "What signifies to you what is passing around? Am not I more to you than the entire universe?"

Ask for the grace of being able to say truly, "There is none on earth I desire in comparison of Thee."

APRIL 24th.

Our Lord's Appearance in Galilee.

I.

"And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them."

This is probably the same occasion of which St. Paul speaks to the Corinthians, when he says, "Then was He seen by more than five hundred brethren at once."

This large number of people must

have had great difficulty in coming together in a mountain place.

You cannot serve our Lord unless you are willing to take trouble.

II.

“And seeing Him, they adored.”

This was probably the first time that a multitude fell down in adoration before the Word Incarnate.

See in spirit our Divine Master passing amidst these ranks of His kneeling people.

Were there not little children there whom again He blessed, and were not feeble hearts filled with joy and strength?

And when you kneel in adoration before Him, do you gain the graces He is ready to bestow?

III.

“But some doubted.”

Even among this favoured crowd some were weak in faith. They thought they saw a beautiful vision, not a reality.

And do you often doubt your Lord's love and power? When you see the

temporary triumph of the wicked, or find your own difficulties immense, does not your heart sink?

Be ashamed of this, and strive henceforth to be truly loyal to your King and Lord.

APRIL 25th.

The Mission of the Apostles.

I.

“And Jesus, coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth.”

How then can you ever give way to distrust or trouble, when you have a Master and a Lord who is omnipotent?

What can harm you if you are His faithful child and servant, and live under His shadow?

II.

“Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.”

Thank your Lord with all your heart

that you have been one to receive this divine teaching, that you are a child of that Church founded so long ago on the mountain of Galilee to teach the world.

And do you strive as far as you can to bring souls into that one true Church?

Example and prayer is in every one's power, and are often the most powerful means of success.

III.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Do you thank God enough for the gift of your baptism?

St. Gertrude used to consecrate one day in the year to thanksgiving to God for this great sacrament.

Do you consider what it is to have been cleansed from original sin, and to have received sanctifying grace? Do you humble yourself enough at the thought how you have lost that precious grace? But our good Lord has given you the means of regaining it.

Thank Him for His goodness, and serve Him generously.

APRIL 26th.

The Mission of the Apostles.—*Continued.*

I.

“Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.”

No limit was put to their labour or their zeal. The whole earth was given over to their jurisdiction. And they obeyed; they scattered themselves over the globe, and spared not flesh and blood.

Are you ready to go wherever God shall send you? Do you prefer any place or any creature to the execution of His will?

The salvation of many a soul may depend on your fidelity.

II.

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

We see that our Lord had taught His apostles all that He desired them to transmit after them. In other words, He founded His Church, with its seven sacraments and its doctrines, which its pastors, beginning with the apostles, were to teach and preserve.

Render most hearty thanks to God for having placed you in His true Church, where you have been taught the grand doctrine our Lord gave to the world.

Pray earnestly for those poor souls who wander in the mists of error, and are misled by false teachers without authority.

III.

“You shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth.”

The apostles bore this witness, not only by their preaching, but by their sanctity and their sacrifices.

Are you bearing witness to the true faith by your holy life and your spirit

of sacrifice? Do you make that Lord, who *lives in you*, loved by your faithful imitation of Him?

It is a great responsibility to be a Catholic. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required."

See to this.

APRIL 27th.

Our Lord's Departure from Earth.

I.

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you."

The joys of earth are very fleeting.

Our dear Lady, the eleven, and the other disciples, had their Easter joys beyond all words to express, and now they were to lose the visible presence of Him, their Well-beloved.

How tenderly He spoke to them as the hour drew near! How tenderly He consoles you when you go to Him for comfort!

II.

"Again I leave the world, and I go to the Father."

The hour must surely come to you to leave the world. Shall you be able to say: "I go to the Father"?

"If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad because I go to the Father."

And if you love your Lord will you not be glad of any occasion of glorifying Him, of making a sacrifice for His sake?

III.

"And now I go to Him that sent Me."

Surely it is time that He should pass from the cross to glory, from earth to heaven, from a life of labour and trouble to eternal rest.

And all those who follow Him in His sufferings and labours shall share His rest and His glory. What matter if the moments of this fleeting life be bitter, provided we are sure of everlasting happiness?

Say, then, to your Saviour: "O, my Lord, let me follow Thee wheresoever Thou goest. Here on earth, in Thy labours and sorrows, in Thy humiliations and Thy immolation, until the hour when Thou shalt receive my last sacrifice, which now beforehand I unite to Thine. Then call me, and bring me into Thy blessed dwelling-place, to be with Thee for ever."

· APRIL 28th.

Our Lord's Departure from Earth.—

Continued.

I.

"It is expedient for you that I go; for if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you."

See the perfect unselfishness of our Lord. He would forego His own happiness and triumph, and remain with us, if it were for our good. But for

our sakes He goes to be our mediator before the Father, while the Paraclete shall work His wonders on the earth.

Ask our Lord for the grace to be unselfish.

II.

“But if I go I will send Him to you.”

If our Lord had remained visibly on earth, would the Apostles ever have been able to leave Him? Would they have gone to evangelize the world?

And do not you sometimes find it hard to give up prayer for sacrifice, to forego the beauty of God's house for painful and obscure labours?

III.

“I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now.”

Very gradually and gently does our Lord lead you on, step by step, from one grace to another.

Have you not at length learnt lessons that at first seemed too hard for you? Have you not learnt that the absence of spiritual consolation was good for you?

that it taught you your own weakness, and thus humility ?

Trust, then, with all your soul, the dear Lord who is watching over your every step.

APRIL 29th.

Our Lord's Promises.

I.

"A little while, and now you shall not see Me : and again a little while and you shall see Me : and because I go to the Father."

There is a sorrow in not being able to see our best Friend. This life must always be an exile ; but our Lord in the tabernacle is our Companion in "this our exile in the vale of tears."

But life compared to eternity is but a dream : and in eternity we shall see Him, our Beloved, for ever.

II.

"So also you now indeed have sorrow,

but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice."

This life is ever sorrowful, and those who mourn are blessed, if they mourn and sorrow in God. Sorrow for the sins you have committed, and for the many offences of mankind ever rising up before God, and because His name is so little glorified.

Jesus is never far away from the soul that He tries or corrects. Take no joy in anything without Jesus, and even in the midst of life's trials "your joy no man shall take from you."

III.

"I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you."

How truly has He kept this promise. He has come to us, and He dwells with us, though hidden under the veils of His sacraments.

He comes to you. Do you go to Him? Is your faith in the Blessed Sacrament a real, living one? Is it your very life?

Try and realize more and more that you are the child of Him who has loved, who does love, with an exceeding tenderness.

APRIL 30th.

Our Lord's Promises,—*Continued.*

I.

“Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name that will I do.”

For years past the apostles had suffered no anxiety; their Master had guided their steps, provided for all their wants. He told them it should still be so, though in another manner.

This promise is made to you also.

Place Jesus Christ between God's justice and your misery. To pray in His name is to trust in His mercy. There is no limit to His promise; let there be no limit to your trust in Him.

II.

“Whatsoever you shall ask of the

Father in My name, He will give it you."

All things may be hoped for from a father. Ask much, and ask with confidence. If you cannot say many words, have the will to pray, which is a mute homage you can render to God.

Our Lord said few words on the cross, but did not His silence pray ?

If sin weighs you down throw yourself into the Heart of Jesus.

III.

"Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name. Ask, and you shall receive ; that your joy may be full."

Now He shows them what He has won. An intercourse between heaven and earth, such as never has been until this hour.

Obey this sweet command. *Ask*, and above all, ask, when, having received Holy Communion, the voice of the Beloved Son mounts from your lips to the throne of God.

You know not what you can obtain

during that precious time. You have more than the promise of being heard; you have the *right* to ask.

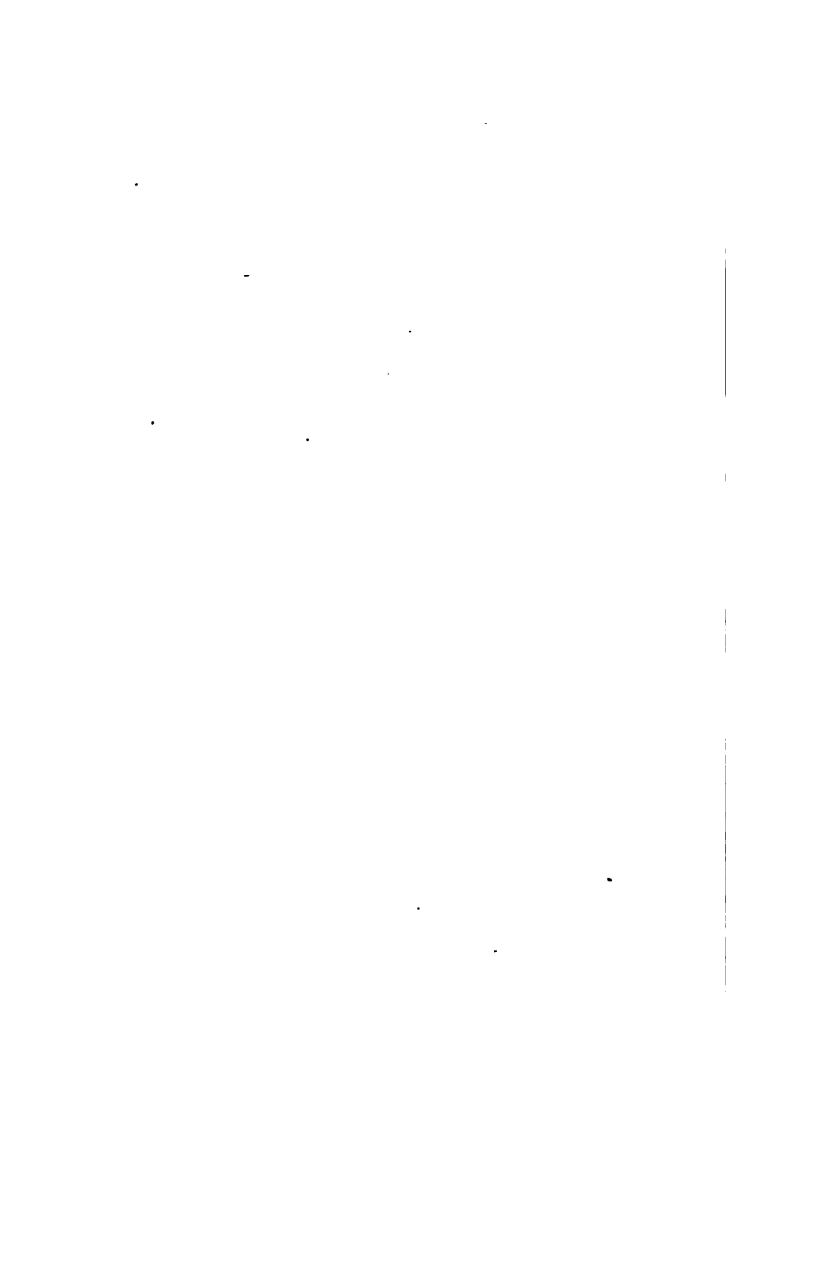
Ask for sanctity; for the love and possession of God. The Father will refuse nothing to His beloved Son, in whom He beholds you and loves you.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

M A Y.



CONTENTS FOR MAY.

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DAY.	PAGE
1. Our Lord's love for us ...	277
2. Our Lord teaches us Mutual Charity ...	279
3. The Marks of our Love for our Lord ...	281
4. Our Lord's Prayer ...	283
5. Our Place in Heaven ...	285
6. Promises of Jesus to His Disciples...	287
7. Our Lord's Life on Earth after His Resur- rection ...	289
8. Our Lord's Farewell ...	291
9. Feast of the Ascension ...	293
10. Jesus Glorified in Heaven ...	295
11. The Cross the Means of our Lord's Glory	298
12. Jesus Glorified on earth by the Holy Spirit	300
13. How we should aspire after Heaven	302
14. Necessity of Living in union with Jesus Christ ...	304
15. Apparition of the Angels after the As- cension ...	306
16. The Apostles Return to Jerusalem ...	308
17. The Apostles in the Upper Chamber	309
18. On the need of the Gift of Divine Light...	311
19. For Whit Sunday.—The Descent of the Holy Ghost ...	315
20. The same, continued ...	317
21. The Holy Ghost ...	319
22. On the Gifts of the Holy Ghost...	321
23. The same, continued... ..	323
24. The same, continued ...	325
25. The Judgment of the Holy Ghost ...	327
26. Feast of the Ever-Blessed Trinity ...	329
27. Our Duties towards the Holy Trinity	331
28. Jesus Christ the Heavenly Vine ...	332
29. Multiplication of the Five Loaves ...	334
30. The Feast of Corpus Christi ...	336
31. The Blessed Eucharist ...	338

SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR MAY.

MAY 1st.

Our Lord's Love for us.

I.

"As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you."

It is no wonder that we cannot understand the love of Jesus for us, when it is so great, so beyond our mortal ken ; but without comprehending it we can adore Him and render thanks.

"Remain in My love."

Live in His Heart, and let Him live in you by your meekness and humility.

Is your mind filled with the thought of Him ? Do you constantly seek to please Him ?

II.

"If you keep My commandments you will remain in My love; as I also have kept My Father's commandments and do remain in His love."

Here is the proof and the test by which you may tell whether you really love our Lord or not,—if you obey His word and keep His precepts; then, however little you may feel it, you do really love our Lord.

III.

"Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

That proof of love Jesus has given to you. Let the thought strengthen you amidst all the sorrows of life.

Try to love Him well in return. See if your love for Him is strong, patient, humble, and disinterested.

But if you cannot find these qualities in yourself do not be discouraged. A good will is the beginning of a sincere

love: with the help of grace the will is power, and invincible power.

Nothing in the world is so strong as the human will. Make a good use of yours.

MAY 2nd.

Our Lord teaches us Mutual Charity.

I.

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.”

The source of love must needs require love. Our Lord makes the love of God and our neighbour the foundation of the Christian life. We have therefore but this one thing to do, and it will make us like unto Him.

The old law had said, “Love thy neighbour as thyself;” but the new law bids us love him as we are loved by the Heart of Jesus.

Are you a living image of charity for others?

II.

“By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.”

Charity, then, is the perfect imitation of our Lord. It is a mark of predestination.

Rejoice in the welfare of others; desire their spiritual advancement as much as your own; pray for their souls as much as for your own; rejoice if they are called to higher sanctity than you.

III.

“You are My friends if you do the things that I command you.”

Friendship implies familiarity. What joy to be intimate with Jesus Christ!

How can you obtain it? Do you deserve He should treat you as a friend? Are you cold towards Him and those He loves?

Be fervent, therefore, in charity.

We, who are nourished by the same Food, animated by the same hopes, destined for the same heaven, in whose

hearts Jesus Christ rests, ought never to be divided in this world, as we shall never be in the life to come.

MAY 3rd.

The Marks of our Love for our Lord.

I.

“If you love Me keep My commandments.”

True love is never idle, and is always submissive.

Try to be perfectly obedient to God's will, or else our Lord cannot believe in your love. No other proofs of it will suffice.

Love consists in deeds, not mere words.

II.

“He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.”

Our Lord repeats this truth over and

over again. He knows how hard it is for us to learn, how apt we are to forget it.

Examine yourself seriously. Ask often and earnestly for the grace of fidelity in little things.

“And he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.”

Mystery of love! hidden from the proud, but revealed to the humble and simple.

III.

“If any one love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him.”

Listen, then, to the word of God, in the sacrament of penance, in the voice of superiors, in the secret of your conscience.

Does Jesus dwell in you? Are the marks of His cross on you?

Ask the grace of an entire devotion to Him in every detail in life, so that you may dwell in Him and He in you.

MAY 4th.**Our Lord's Prayer.****I.**

"Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given Me; that they may be one, as We also are. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth."

Do you belong in any way to that world opposed to Jesus Christ? Is there anything in you of its ways, its spirit, its judgments? Can our Lord show your heart to the Father as a sanctuary wherein He reigns?

II.

"And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me."

You, then, were in the thoughts of your Divine Lord at this moment; He prayed for you.

Can you desire a greater consolation?

"As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."

Our Lord sacrificed Himself for you, that you also might sacrifice yourself for souls.

Thank your Lord for showing you the treasures of sanctification you can find in self-abnegation.

III.

"Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me; that they may see My glory, which Thou hast given Me."

Our passage through life is very short. It is only a means to attain our true end, the possession of God.

"I in them, and Thou in Me."

His infinite merits are ever before the Father in my name.

"Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me."

This is the prayer our Lord makes for you, after you have received Him in Communion.

Can He say He is in your thoughts, words, actions, and feelings; that your soul is one with Him?

Strive after this union with Him. Love what He loves,—humility, self-contempt, the cross.

MAY 5th.

Our Place in Heaven

I.

“I go to prepare a place for you.”

Yes, a place is ready for you in heaven, if you will strive to attain it. Turn away your eyes from the earth, where you find such trouble and bitterness; look up with joyful gratitude to your place in heaven, and redouble your efforts.

See the anxiety your Lord has for your eternal happiness.

“In My Father’s house there are many mansions.”

Strive to have your place near the Heart of Jesus.

II.

“And if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself; that where I am you also may be.”

Dwell on the thought of this joy. To be with Jesus is to be in light, in peace, in love, and in heaven. This will be for ever.

And that we may share this bliss, Jesus sends you trials; they have no other end. Blush for your weakness in complaining of them.

III.

“And whither I go you know, and the way you know.”

There is but one road to heaven; the way of the cross.

This is your hour of labour and suffering: but take courage. As you mount the steps up to Calvary, look at the tabernacle, and you will see that Jesus has come back to seek you. We do not walk in darkness. What light is shed

in our paths from the Blessed Sacrament!

Then forward bravely. Jesus is come that you may follow Him, and that He may guide you from earth to heaven.

MAY 6th.

Promises of Jesus to His Disciples.

I.

“And I send the promise of My Father upon you.”

He would send them a Comforter to fill His place, to shed forth into their hearts, strength, virtue, sanctity.

And this promise is for you. Is your soul a fit dwelling-place for that divine Consoler whom Jesus sent to us as the greatest gift He could bestow?

II.

“Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high.”

Our Lord wished His apostles to wait

for the Holy Spirit in quiet and in recollection.

If you would have divine graces you must be calm.

Wait for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, without anxiety, in perfect conformity to the divine will.

Be on your guard against natural activity. Remember you can do nothing right without God's light and grace.

III.

"And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Precious and consoling promise of Him who, "having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."

Jesus is ever with us; by His grace, His teaching, and authority, by His providence, and above all, by His presence in the Eucharist.

You can, then, count on Him to help you in your duties, and to bear your crosses.

He is the witness of all your actions, ready to comfort you in your sufferings.

Jesus is with you on *all days*, even on the saddest.

Cherish, then, the three-fold bond that binds you to Him : to His will by your actions, to His sufferings by your sorrows, to His adorable Person by Holy Communion.

If the dust of this earth clings to your life, enter into the Heart of Jesus, and it will be consumed.

MAY 7th.

Our Lord's Life on Earth after His Resurrection.

I.

"Seek the things that are above."

During the forty days our Lord only appeared to His apostles a few times and for a brief space. He hid Himself from the common gaze of men.

Do you hide yourself from creatures, and dwell with Jesus in solitude of heart ?

Our Lord was ever praying for us.
Let each action of yours be a prayer.

Our Lord did not even dwell with
His holy Mother.

Be detached from even the holiest
affections.

II.

“But our conversation is in heaven.”

Our Lord erewhile living in poverty
and labours, now has need of nothing.

So do you now live a new life, and
disengage yourself as much as you can
from the things of earth.

If you would live a supernatural life
you should begin afresh every day with-
out growing weary.

Despise the world, disdain all that it
loves, and aspire only after eternal
things.

III.

“Christ, rising again from the dead,
dieth now no more.”

Here is the model of holy perseverance.

It is easy to begin, hard not to fall
back. Yet heaven is only for those who
persevere.

What then can you do ?

Never give up. After each fall rise again, and press forward to your end ; like the traveller, who, though he may often slip and stumble, yet holds on his way, never turning back. So do you never turn back from the path of self-conquest, and heaven will be yours at last.

MAY 8th.

Our Lord's Farewell.

I.

"And He led them out as far as to Bethania."

Our Lord leads those who give themselves to Him out of the world, for it is not in the midst of its turmoils and dissipations that we can understand His divine mysteries, and we must go by "Bethany," (which signifies obedience,) to heaven.

Our Lord would ascend from the Mount of Olives, at the foot of which

He had so sorely suffered, to show us how sorrow leads to eternal joy.

II.

“And lifting up His hands, He blessed them.”

Kneel in spirit to receive the last visible blessing of your Divine Lord ere He leaves the earth. See those hands, which men so cruelly pierced, scattering blessings in return.

Tradition says our Lord made the sign of the cross in this blessing, and therefore the Church has ever since preserved this form in benedictions.

Say to our Lord after receiving Holy Communion, “I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.”

Will not all graces fall on you through these wounds in His hands?

III.

“While they looked on.”

Their eyes were fastened on Him; not one instant of that blessed vision would they lose.

Are your eyes fixed on Jesus Christ?

Do you study His character, seek to know His will that you may do it ?

Do you often look up to heaven, and think of the day when you, by God's mercy, shall enter therein ?

And then your place at the altar rails will be given to another.

Are you, then, now gathering all the fruits of your communions that you may enjoy them for ever ?

MAY 9th.

Feast of the Ascension.

I.

“Whilst He blessed them He departed from them, and was carried up to heaven.”

His last words and thoughts and acts were for those He loved on earth ; and then, by His own power He raised Himself from earth and slowly quitted it.

Follow in spirit the adoring gaze of our Lady and the disciples as they watched Him depart. The spot of earth

where He had rested for the last time received an impress of His blessed feet, visible to this day.

And in that moment of triumph the Sacred Heart was filled with ineffable joy.

Rejoice in the joy of Him who has suffered so much for you.

II.

“And a cloud received Him out of their sight.”

And even in the hour of this separation the hearts of all on Mount Olivet were full of joy; for interior joy does not depend on outward things. And though our Lord quitted the earth visibly, yet He had left His presence in the Eucharist.

And truly in the Blessed Sacrament a cloud only hides Him from our sight. We possess Him fully, but His glory is veiled.

Then let us forget the earth, and raise our thoughts to heaven.

Jesus has entered into His rest; the

hour is not far distant for us. Heaven has now become your "inheritance."

III.

"If you loved Me you would indeed be glad because I go to the Father."

Then the joy of our Lady must have been great, for it was equal to her love. She longed indeed to follow Him into heaven, but yet joyfully she made the sacrifice of living awhile on earth for His greater glory, and to finish her work as Mother of the infant Church.

Ask her to gain you the grace to love our Lord more than yourself, and to sacrifice yourself, if need be, for His greater glory.

MAY 10th.

Jesus Glorified in Heaven.

I.

"And the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven."

Imagine the great company of angels

who came to meet their King, and the crowd of the elect, set free from limbo, who attended His entrance.

The Ascension is our Lord's own special feast, for even since His resurrection He had yet lingered a pilgrim on earth. It is our feast also, because for the first time humanity entered heaven.

Let your heart expand with joy and hope.

II.

"And sitteth on the right hand of God."

How far beyond any thoughts of ours is the glory of the sacred humanity of Jesus, King of heaven and earth. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Direct your heart, then, on high, to the place marked for you, and let the "joy of the Lord be your strength."

III.

"None can go up to heaven but He that is come down from heaven."

Therefore you must live in Jesus Christ, since it is only *in Him* that you will rise to heaven. Make each communion a step to rise up, by which you mount to eternal bliss.

St. Paul says, "Your conversation is in heaven;" not ought to be, but *is*, as if he thought no true Christian could ever care about this world.

Do not, then, let the slightest earthly thread bind down the wings of your soul, but let it rest while on earth near the tabernacle, and then soar to heaven.

MAY 11th.

**The Cross the Means of our Lord's
Glory.**

I.

“Ought not Christ to have suffered?”

Our Lord thus teaches us that suffering must atone for sin. He suffered because He had taken our sins,—your sins,—on Him.

See how God has thought of you from all eternity.

Will you not give this short passing life to Him?

II.

“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?”

Our Lord went through a number of different kinds of suffering, in His body, soul, and mind; from His friends and His enemies; and even from His Eternal Father: and each suffering has now its own peculiar reward.

So will it be with you, for each cross

you bear patiently a separate eternal reward.

III.

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps.”

Do not be surprised to see the good suffer more than others. They are tried because they are worthy. For if during this short life they have been like Jesus crucified, death shall transform them into His glorious image.

Jesus sacrifices Himself in the Eucharist that He may come to you. Remain united to Him by the sacrifice of yourself.

Ask your risen Lord never to allow your nature to triumph over your faith.

MAY 12th.

Jesus Glorified on earth by the Holy Spirit,

I.

“The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My name, will bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you.”

To the Holy Spirit you owe the knowledge necessary for your salvation. If left to your own weakness you could never follow Jesus Christ, or gain profit from His merits.

If you are docile to these divine inspirations you glorify Jesus Christ.

II.

“When the Paraclete shall come, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me.”

And you shall give testimony.

Do not be cast down at the sight of your own weakness. Without the Holy

Spirit the apostles could never have preached the Gospel; and that same help, in its degree, will be given to you.

Glorify Jesus, then, by bending those passions which oppose His reign over you to the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

III.

“When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall glorify Me.”

The work of the Holy Spirit is to make Jesus known, feared, and loved.

And that He may form His likeness in you, the Holy Spirit excites your faith, strengthens your hope, and influences your heart, so that all your actions and maxims may be after the example of your Divine Master.

You can accept or reject His graces as you will.

See, then, if you are, by means of the Holy Spirit, really giving glory to Jesus Christ.

MAY 13th.**How we should aspire after Heaven.****I.**

"He became the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey Him."

Our Lord ascended in the sight of His apostles, to teach us that after a few short years on earth our pilgrimage will end in heaven.

Heaven is our true country, and our place therein has cost the Blood of Jesus. He, our Head, has gone before, and we, if we choose, can follow Him.

Pass on, then, through earth without attaching yourself to anything. Be indifferent to all that will vanish away. Say to yourself, What will this or that profit me for eternity?

II.

"Jesus is entered into heaven itself."

What would the empire of the world have seemed to the apostles as they

watched their Lord ascending? Assuredly nothing.

And so the world ought to be nothing to us.

Are you aspiring after heaven, or do you lean towards creatures?

III.

"That He may appear now in the presence of God for us."

You must therefore live a life above nature, that you may also appear in His presence. It is not so much what you do as the spirit in which you act that is of importance. A pure intention is founded on self-abnegation.

Then be generous in following this path, and humbly ask our Lord never to suffer you to be eternally separated from Him.

MAY 14th.

**Necessity of Living in union with
Jesus Christ.**

I.

“As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.”

Convince yourself that you are nothing, but that, united to Jesus Christ, you can surmount any difficulty. Thus it is the Church ends all her prayers, “through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Never, then, act by yourself; for you will only hinder His work. Seek to do His will, and not to follow the inclinations of nature.

II.

“I am the vine, you the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.”

Baptism made you a branch of the vine. You belong to a liberal Master, who will reward a hundred-fold those who cling to Him.

Long to bring forth fruit, and therefore accept suffering.

An affliction is a secret visit from Jesus. Receive it, then, gladly. Those who suffer patiently are truly abiding in Him.

III.

“If you remain in Me, and My words remain in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you.”

Our Lord teaches us that our union with Him is a voluntary act of ours. He desires to reign over us by love, not by force.

The words which are to abide in us are the words of the cross. To abide in Jesus is to consent meekly to crucifixion of soul and desires.

To pray with Him and by Him is to ask for His Blood and for His sufferings, that they may cleanse your soul, and bring you nearer to God.

Take courage, then, and place these thoughts between your weakness and the crosses of your life.

MAY 15th.

**Apparition of the Angels after the
Ascension.**

I.

“And whilst they were beholding Him going up to heaven.”

Their eyes were still fixed on the sky, although no trace of their Divine Lord remained.

So should you ever have the eyes of your mind fixed on heaven.

St. Martin of Tours said, “Let me look at heaven, that I may know the way my soul will have to travel.”

II.

“Behold, two men stood by them in white garments.”

Scarcely had our Lord reached the right hand of His Father, than He sent two angels to sustain the courage of those He had left behind. His Heart was ever watching over them.

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven?"

We must never stand still in God's service, but go on from virtue to virtue. It will not suffice to gaze at heaven only: we must labour and suffer, we must do violence to ourselves. We must be ready to leave prayer for charity, and charity for prayer, as God wills.

These angels left heaven rejoicing in its King, to do His will on earth.

III.

"This Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, so shall He come as you have seen Him going into heaven."

How short, then, is life; to the eyes of the angels it seems but a moment between the ascension and the coming of the Lord.

Despise, then, the things of earth; live detached from all things. "Raise your heart," says St. Gregory, "to where Jesus has raised His Adorable Body."

Ask our Lord that the same love which governs heaven may rule our affections.

MAY 16th.

The Apostles Return to Jerusalem.

I.

“And they adoring, went back to Jerusalem.”

Join them in spirit as they humbly kneel and kiss the marks of those divine feet that so lately trod this earth.

Now that you have learnt the marvels of His love and the generosity of His rewards, go on to serve Him with a docile heart and determined will.

II.

“With great joy.”

This joy sprang from their faith, which from henceforth never wavered from the hope they had of the Holy Ghost, and of heaven hereafter, and from the love which knit their hearts to Jesus, though they were separated in body.

And this faith and hope and love you can possess, you ought to possess, and then your life will be one of great joy.

III.

“Praising and blessing God.”

Now how fast upon their minds came back the memory of the words their Master had spoken, the miracles He had wrought, the sanctity which He had shown. They were full of joyful gratitude for the choice He had made of them to witness and to hear these things.

Do you rejoice that the light of God's truth has been shown to you; that you are not, as many, in heathen darkness or in error, but that you are the child of the Church?

Cultivate in yourself the spirit of thanksgiving.

MAY 17th.

The Apostles in the Upper Chamber.

I.

“And when they had entered in, they went up into an upper room.”

They prepared for the coming of the

Holy Ghost by withdrawing from the cares and distractions of their ordinary life, and spending the time in recollection.

From their example the Church has blessed the pious custom of spending some days every year in retreat; retiring from our pressing occupations to give ourselves to recollection.

Do you avail yourself of this means of grace? Do you profit well by it?

II.

"All were persevering with one mind in prayer."

Recollection is the foundation of earnest prayer. And union and charity are the fire that keeps prayer alive.

If we pray only for ourselves, our prayers will be of little avail. Pray most earnestly with others and for others.

Father Olivaint, of the Society of Jesus, who was martyred in Paris, said, "I hide myself amidst the prayers of those who love me."

III.

"And with Mary the Mother of Jesus."

Here is the last glimpse we have in the Gospel of our Mother. She is praying in the midst of her children; Queen of the infant Church, model of recollection and unselfish charity.

Have a great ambition to imitate your Mother.

Bear patiently with others; live for them, not for self; and so doing you will live with Mary in Jesus.



MAY 18th.

On the need of the Gift of Divine Light.

I.

"We have groped for the wall, and, like the blind, we have stumbled at noonday as in the dark."

The deepest darkness of the soul is that which is blind to its own blindness.

The blind man Bartimeus was near

to his cure when he cried out so lustily; but his desire for light was great, his sense of privation keen. How rare, alas! are souls who feel as he did.

When have you prayed, like him, "Lord, that I may see"? Not now, O Lord, not yet do I so pray, but this, at least, "Teach me that I am blind."

Think how innumerable the causes of this common blindness are. I am born blind from the effects of original sin, and it is certain that every actual sin aggravates my state. Every passion which I do not mortify makes it more dense: vanity, self-love in its innumerable forms, interest, sensuality, affection, dislike, prejudice, pride. Ponder.

The eyes cannot pierce the waters whose surface is ruffled. And the soul gazes in vain into the heart in which excitement, pain, or joy have not been stilled. How much prayer-time is lost for want of that little hint of St. Ignatius, "*Quiescat paululum spiritus.*" "Let the soul rest a little before prayer."

Have I not cause enough to doubt

whether my eyes are opened to my own blindness ?

II.

“And who shall know, except Thou send Thy Holy Spirit ?”

Light costs me dear, it is true, —much prayer, much mortification ; but we fear not to pray when we know that what we beg is priceless, and when it is ours we guard it carefully. From want of light, shoals of grace are wasted, motives are misunderstood, efforts are misdirected. The light within us is but little, says the *Imitation*, and even this little we quickly lose by negligence.

Often we act ill, and make it worse by excusing ourselves. At times we are moved by passion, and we think it zeal.

This weakness we quickly recognize in those around us ; we see clearly how a good will is made fruitless because of some wrong idea, some prejudice, some passion, which spoils their life, and they cannot see it.

Let us ask with fear and humility. And may this not be as just, as true of

me? It is the special attribute of the Holy Ghost to enlighten the soul. Let me pray fervently to-day for this much light, to see the darkness I have lived in.

III.

"I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete."

Now see how sweetly our Lord hastens to console those in whom this first thought has awakened a holy fear.

"He will teach you."

But in whom is this promise of divine light fulfilled? In those who truly wish for it: "I wished, and it was given to me." To those who pray for it: "I called upon God, and it came upon me." To those who value it: "I preferred it before kingdoms and thrones." To those who love it: "I loved it above health and beauty."

Alas! and I have neither wished for, nor prayed for, nor valued, nor loved, the light, the self-knowledge, which would humble me. What wonder if I am blind? "Lord, that I may see," at least that I may see.

Nay, even this is not enough if I am earnest. The Holy Ghost says of Himself, "And He gave me a strong conflict that He might overcome." The vanity, the self-love, sensuality, on which I meditated yesterday, the passions which blind the soul; these must be bravely fought against and mortified, if I would make my bosom the home of the Holy Ghost, if I am to walk by the light which cannot be put out.

Per crucem ad lucem. The way to light is the way of the cross.

Light, then, will cost me dear; but it is an infinite treasure to men, which they that use become the friends of God.



MAY 19th.—WHIT SUNDAY.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

I.

"And when the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were altogether in the same place: and suddenly there

came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting."

The Holy Spirit is the pledge of peace between heaven and earth. He came in power, to show that He would change the face of the earth.

Ask the grace of docility to His inspirations.

II.

"And there appeared to them cloven tongues, as it were of fire; and it sat upon each of them."

Fire is the symbol of sanctity; it purifies the dross, consumes the earthly.

Ask the Holy Spirit to govern your tongue, that you may never use it save for God's glory.

III.

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

We should reverence our souls and bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

As fire springs up from earth, so let

your heart soar towards heaven. Let this celestial flame consume your earthly attachments, and draw you to the love of eternal things.

Ask help from our Lady, spouse of the Holy Ghost.

MAY 20th.

The Descent of the Holy Ghost,—

Continued.

I.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”

And this heavenly gift changed the twelve from cowardly and ignorant men into apostles full of courage, wisdom, and love.

Jesus Christ, their light, their love, their life, was shed abroad in their hearts and on their lips.

II.

“And they began to speak with divers tongues.”

Now was the Church to begin her mission, to become universal, and all nations were to hear the glad tidings of salvation.

Do you do all you can to spread the true faith, the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ? Do you often pray, “Thy kingdom come”?

III.

“According as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak.”

They no longer acted by themselves, but followed the divine teaching.

It is the office of the Holy Ghost to show us our duty, to warn us against temptations.

Do you listen to His secret voice? Do you ever grieve the Holy Ghost by your indocility?

Ask for the grace to enable Him to lead you as He wills.

MAY 21st.**The Holy Ghost.****I.**

“For God hath not given to us the Spirit of fear, but of power.”

The world is a coward, the blind slave of human respect; it trembles to fail, trembles to be laughed at, trembles to suffer, and thinks these things the worst of evils.

The Holy Ghost, “whom the world cannot receive,” because “it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him,” teaches us to see clearly that these are not evils at all; and thus enlightened, makes us strong to endure whatever God permits, and even to rejoice to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus.

II.

“God hath not given to us the Spirit of fear, but of love.”

The world is a coward; it knows nothing of generosity; it cringes be-

fore the strong ; it oppresses the weak ; it gives that it may get.

The Holy Ghost, "whom the world cannot receive," teaches us to see clearly that the only true loss is to hear the words, "Thou hast received thy reward;" and thus enlightened, makes us love nothing but Jesus Christ,—but Jesus Christ without bounds;—and without any reward, do good to all men for Jesus Christ's sake.

III.

"God hath not given us the Spirit of fear, but of sobriety."

The world is a coward; it is very brave in prosperity and power, but despairs in the hour of heavy trial.

The Holy Ghost, "whom the world cannot receive," teaches us to see clearly that in the hour of danger God is no less powerful than He ever was, and that with Him all hours are hours of danger; and thus enlightened, He makes us diligently use every means God gives us to help our weakness, yet

trusting not in them, but in Him whose gifts they are.

“ Oh ! guide our minds with Thy blest
light,
With love our hearts inflame ;
And with Thy strength, which ne’er
decays,
Confirm our mortal frame.”

MAY 22nd.

On the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

I.

“ And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.”

As yesterday you saw that there is a fear which is not holy, and which is the spirit of the world, so now consider that the fear of God is the spirit of the saints, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The word of God never tires of telling its value. It calls it the beginning of wisdom, (Ps. cxi.) wisdom itself, (Prov.

xxviii.) the crown of wisdom, (Eccl. xxii.) a fountain of life, (Prov. xiv.) a paradise of blessing, (Eccl. xl.) the glory of the rich, of the honourable, and of the poor. (Eccl. x.)

II.

“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”

It is not so common a gift as might be expected. Many even devout persons have in reality very little of it. None less than those who indulge scrupulosity, which always leads at last to a lax conscience.

Holy fear does not make us doubt God's forgiveness when we are sorry for our faults.

III.

“It shall be well with them that fear God.”

The signs of this fear of God are, first, a great horror of deliberate venial sin; secondly, a great reverence and modesty when we are alone; thirdly, great sim-

plicity, free from shyness and human respect; for those who fear God have no other fear.

All this deserves to be thought about with much prayer.

MAY 23rd.

On the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.—

Continued.

I.

“The spirit of godliness.”

Piety is that grace which makes our spiritual exercises a pleasure to us.

Rightly used, it is therefore an immense help to obtain and increase solid virtue, though not always a sign of it. It is sometimes despised by foolish persons, because not always accompanied by discretion. We shall neither preserve piety nor use it profitably if we make a vain display of it.

II.

“And of fortitude.”

Fortitude is the grace which enables us to resist temptation, and begin again after we have broken our resolutions.

Many, who can bear patiently with the faults of others, cannot be patient with themselves. Their constant failures are too keen a blow to their pride; and the false humility, which says it is of no use to try any more, consoles their self-love.

Do not fall into this snare.

III.

“The spirit of counsel.”

Counsel teaches us to preserve the mean between excess and defect in the practice of good works. Its fruit is discretion, and it is equally opposed to cowardice and rashness. It is the virtue which makes a devout life so great a help to our neighbours.

Examine yourself about each, and pray earnestly for light and grace. Take a little pains to see how much your life

would change if these gifts were yours, and remember "to him who knocks it shall be opened."

MAY 24th.

On the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.—

Continued.

I.

"The spirit of knowledge."

The gift of knowledge is that which renders us prudent, and thoughtful, and cautious in our exterior duties, saving us from negligence and hastiness. It secures that, as far as in us lies, everything is done well."

II.

"And of understanding."

The gift of understanding does the same good office for our interior life which the gift of knowledge fulfils for our external actions. It enables us to discover and avoid the illusions and

snare of the devil, and prevents us from mistaking bad motives for good ones. It also makes our faith vivid, so that it greatly influences our life.

III.

“The spirit of wisdom.”

The supreme gift of wisdom is that which affords us a more clear light to see that God is our last and only good, that all things else are nothing, except as helps to reach Him, or obstacles to prevent us from reaching Him.

It makes us live for God alone, and care nothing for pleasure or pain. It frees from ignorance and weariness of heavenly things, shows us the true nature of sin and folly, and disposes us to union with God and true devotion.

As yesterday, examine yourself upon each, and pray for light and grace.

MAY 25th.

The Judgment of the Holy Ghost.

I.

“And when He shall come He will convince the world of sin.”

It is the light of the Holy Spirit which shows the soul its guilt, and inclines it to seek by repentance peace with God.

This light will enable you to see what is the root of sin in you, what is your principal fault or besetting sin.

Pray much to have this divine light.

II.

“He shall convince the world of sin, and of justice.”

It is the Holy Ghost who teaches us to be just towards God, by recognizing that all that is good in us is of Him. Without Him we can do nothing but evil.

See if you really believe this, that

God is your absolute Master, since He created you.

The Holy Spirit pierces into our secret motives. Our actions are of no account before God if our motives are not pure, if we are not interiorly humble.

III.

“He shall convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment.”

It is, then, the office of the Holy Ghost, who is infallible Wisdom, to judge: not ours. We are not to censure nor condemn others.

Try to close your eyes to the faults of others, and never to speak of them without necessity.

See how our Lord is always excusing you, and pleading for you. How merciful is the Holy Ghost in bearing with you; and will you not be so with others?

By your own judgments you shall be judged.

Ask the gift of charity from Him who is the Love of the Father and the Son.

MAY 26th.**Feast of the Ever-Blessed Trinity.****I.**

“There are Three that give testimony in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these Three are One.”

Adore with simple and undoubting faith this sublime mystery, which is beyond our understanding. Adore the Eternal Father. Render Him all the homage of your heart, and say to Him often with loving confidence, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.”

II.

“And our fellowship may be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

Adore Jesus the Son, coeternal and coequal with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Adore Him in that ineffable glory which He hides from you on earth that

He may guard and defend your soul, and strive to purify the heart which is so often the abode of the Very God of Very God.

III.

"You have an unction from the Holy One."

Adore the Holy Ghost, the source of all created sanctity. By Him was wrought the mystery of the Incarnation, and by Him you are united with God.

"The charity of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost," says St. Paul.

You are the temples of this Holy Spirit. Reverence His presence in yourself.

Pray, then, often that you may learn to know, love, and adore the Triune God, One in Three, and Three in One.

MAY 27th.

Our Duties towards the Holy Trinity.

I.

“ We are of God.”

By Him alone we are ; all that we are or have is due to Him.

Give Him the homage of your whole life, by obedience, love, and self-sacrifice, according to His good pleasure, our Creator and our Master.

See if in your daily life you honour the Adorable Trinity one God.

II.

“ And every one that hath this hope in Him sanctifieth himself, as He also is holy.”

We cannot honour God unless we hate sin. We cannot gaze at heaven and earth at the same time.

If you really adore your God, He will reign over you.

Serve God, then, with a single mind.

Your heart is too small to be divided ; give it all to God.

III.

"And they rested not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come."

Let us begin on earth that which will be our work in heaven, to glorify our God. Our dear Lord has set us the example. His work on earth was to glorify God.

Give yourself up, then, to Him; give body and soul, health, reputation, joy and sorrow, that He may make of you a docile instrument by which God's glory may be promoted.

MAY 28th.

Jesus Christ the Heavenly Vine:

I.

"I am the true Vine, and My Father is the husbandman."

Our Lord gave His sacred humanity

into the hands of His Father, that He might do with Him as He would.

“Every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

Here is the explanation of all your trials and sufferings. They were all the cutting away of that which hindered your spiritual growth.

Be patient, therefore, under sorrow, sickness, spiritual desolation, unkindness. All, if borne well, will bring forth more fruit.

II.

“Without Me you can do nothing.”

Without the grace of God we cannot pray or act. We cannot do anything pleasing in His sight.

Accept that dependence on His will; give yourself up to His love. Keep your eyes fixed on His will; live in the spirit of faith.

“If you cannot bear the contempt of the world with Jesus,” says St. Austin, “you have no part in Him.”

III.

"In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit."

Our Lord chose the vine and its branches as a type of the perfect union of our souls with Him. A branch cut off from the sap must die. Without God our spiritual life dries up and perishes.

Ask, then, the grace of ever clinging closely to Jesus, of imitating His life and obeying His words, that you may, in your degree, glorify the One God.

MAY 29th.

Multiplication of the Five Loaves.

I.

"His disciples came to Him, saying: This is a desert place; send away the multitudes, that going, they may buy themselves meat."

This world is a vast desert wherein

we can find no food for our immortal souls.

Our Lord from heaven "had compassion," because He saw us all "as sheep not having a shepherd."

No one can pity us like our Lord. All that God does is in mercy, and the greatest work of His mercy is the Eucharist, the completion of the Incarnation.

II.

"And He saith: How many loaves have you? go and see. And when they knew they say: Five, and two fishes. And He commanded them to make them all sit down by companies upon the green grass."

How tenderly did our Lord deal with these poor people. How tenderly also does He invite all who will to sit at His feet, and receive heavenly food from Him.

Every one may come. He calls us from every rank, from every position in life, to be fed by Him.

III.

“Looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves. And they did all eat, and had their fill.”

St. Anselm bids us consider who were those thus fed. Those who came to seek our Lord in the desert, undergoing privations for His sake.

And the bread of the Eucharist is for the souls who will follow Him, who will endure somewhat for His sake.

And the more you mortify self, the more fruit will you obtain from your communions.

MAY 30th.

The Feast of Corpus Christi.

I.

“As often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come.”

This is the day on which the Church

pours forth with all her strength her song of triumph and thanksgiving for the gift of the Eucharist. Until He comes again visibly in His glorious body she "shows forth His death." She proclaims that miracle of His love by which He had chosen to be with us all days, even to the end of the world.

Let your feeble adoration blend with the mighty voice of the Church.

II.

"Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice."

What more could our Lord have done for us than He has? He has given us Himself; He is our food, our strength, our life.

What more can you do for Him? Is there anything left that you have not given Him yet? Is the tabernacle your home? Is the Eucharist the one centre of your life, your hope, your joy?

III.

"The commemoration of Me."

The Blessed Eucharist is the life of the Church. Every day may be said to be its festival, since every day the Adorable Sacrifice of the Altar is offered up. But on this feast we proclaim the mercies of the Lord, so that the whole universe may hear our joy and our thanksgiving.

Is your heart for ever filled with wondering gratitude for the gift of Holy Mass? Do you draw all the profit you can from this means of grace?

Ask our Lady to teach you more and more how to become the devoted servant and child of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

MAY 31st.

The Blessed Eucharist.

I.

"I will joy in God my Jesus."
Do you joy in God your Jesus?
Many think this joy is not at their
a command. It is, however, if *they*

really will to have it; but, as says the Imitation, "Behold, thou canst not have two joys."

The Blessed Sacrament gives joy to all, the holy, the tempted, the penitent, the glad, the anxious, the grateful, and the suffering. Each finds a home and welcome at the foot of the tabernacle.

II.

"He that cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst."

What words of wondrous consolation !

Are not all the children of men thirsting after something: for health, for fame, for love, for some poor gratification, and their thirst is never slaked ? Even the few who succeed are never satisfied, and the many are all disappointed ; for "the heart can never rest save on Thee," cried St. Austin ; and the long ages have echoed his confession.

How many simple souls there are who find all their consolation, their sweetest rest, before the altar. Happy

you if yours be one of them, and grateful and humble should the thought make you ; for how many are there not who, though more worthy, know Him not.

Ask for great love. If, however, you find none of this consolation, still never be discouraged. All He asks is, sincerely *mean what you say.*

III.

“I am the bread of life.”

Day by day Jesus descends upon the altar, to help you, to listen to you, and to console you.

Be full of confidence in Him, whose goodness never grows weary of our misery, and who only regrets that we will not let Him do more for us.

He dwells in the tabernacle, not for His own sake, but for yours. Draw near with joyful trust to this throne of mercy. Leave your heart there, and beg Him to destroy all that can hinder your perfect union with Him.

SHORT MEDITATIONS

ACCORDING TO THE

Method of St. Ignatius.

J U N E .



CONTENTS FOR JUNE.

—————:O:—————

DAY.	PAGE
1. Jesus in the Tabernacle	345
2. The same, continued	347
3. Silence of Jesus	350
4. The Obedience of Jesus	352
5. Our Lord in the Holy Viaticum ...	354
6. Our duties towards the Blessed Eucharist	356
7. On the Reparation due to our Lord in the Holy Eucharist... ..	358
8. Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus ...	360
9. The Sacred Heart... ..	362
10. The Well of Samaria	364
11. The Living Water	366
12. Our Lord's Knowledge of the Heart ...	368
13. Our Lord Preaches in Galilee ...	370
14. Our Lord on the Lake of Genesareth ...	372
15. The same, continued... ..	374
16. The Driving out of the Money Changers	376
17. The Ruler's Son	379
18. The same, continued	381
19. Our Lord casts out a devil... ..	383
20. The cure of Simon's wife's mother ...	385
21. Our Lord Heals the Sick	387
22. Three who wish to follow our Lord ...	389
23. The same, continued	391
24. Our Lord Stills the Storm	393
25. Our Lord's Miracle among the Gerasens	395
26. The same, continued	397
27. After the Miracle	399
28. The Hem of our Lord's Garment ...	401
29. The same, continued	404
30. The Vocation of St. Matthew... ..	406

SHORT MEDITATIONS FOR JUNE.

JUNE 1st.

Jesus in the Tabernacle.

I.

“My eyes also shall be open.”

Our dear Lord is with us in His Sacrament as truly as He was in His mortal life. Let us try in faith to contemplate those dear eyes of His which looked so mercifully on sinners while on earth. How often their gaze was lowered, teaching us how to guard our eyes, and to avoid unnecessary observation.

The Gospel constantly says, “And Jesus, lifting up His eyes,” as if He were then using them in a manner not habitual to Him.

Let me, kneeling humbly before Him, ask Him to lift up those eyes, and gaze upon me, and implant in my heart a love of modesty, and in my eyes its true expression.

II.

“And My ears attentive to the prayer of him that shall pray in this place.”

Let me try to strengthen my faith in this promise. How far less lonely I should be if I realized how He hears me.

How often in a mother's care over her children, or in those who nurse the sick, do we realize a watchful ear,—one that catches the slightest sound, and knows how to interpret it.

But never was an ear so watchful as that of Jesus, for He hears and understands our unspoken words, the hidden yearnings of our souls.

III.

“And My people shall seek out My face.”

Let me gaze by faith upon the divine face of Jesus, hidden in His tabernacle.

Of old time Moses cried out, "Show me Thy glory;" and God answered, "Thou canst not see My face, for man cannot see Me and live." But our dear Lord made it possible for us by taking our humanity and glorifying it.

A thin veil only hides from me the features of the "King in His beauty;" He is really here.

O adorable Face! full of grace and beauty, resplendent with glory, radiant with light, and hidden in the Eucharist, look graciously on me, Thy poor servant, and be merciful to me until I come to see Thee in beatific vision.



JUNE 2nd.

Jesus in the Tabernacle.—*Continued.*

I.

"Thou gavest Me no kiss: but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet."

Let me pause and realize that there,

in the tabernacle, are those same divine feet which poor Magdalene kissed with such deep liveliness of shame and grief.

How pleased He was with her reverence, and He is as sensible, as ready to welcome my devotion, as in spirit I humbly kiss them too, and wash them with my tears.

Let me contemplate, then, those beloved feet, hidden under the sacramental form. How often were they wearied and aching for my sake? How often did they bleed?

Let me prostrate myself before Him in spirit, and cling to them, pouring out my heart's troubles and sorrows. My prayers will be heard then.

II.

"Behold, I have graven thee in My hands."

The last act of our Lord on earth was to lift up His hands and bless His faithful ones, as the Gospel says, "Whilst He blessed them He departed from them."

So certainly those beautiful hands are

ever ready to bless me when I kneel before Him. How often, too, when holy benediction is given, does He lay His hands on my bowed head: does virtue then go out of Him into my soul?

A multitude thronged Him, and pressed against Him once, but only one really touched Him so far as to obtain her healing. She was one who desired greatly.

III.

"His head is as the finest gold. He is all lovely."

Let me adore the head of my beloved Lord, on which was once set for me the crown of thorns, and where now are "many diadems." That sacred head, now gloriously crowned in heaven, was once scorned as a fool, and now it is hidden away upon neglected altars, and forgotten by men.

Let me lay down my pride before it, deplore my intellectual conceit, my esteem of my own opinion, my contempt of those who differ from me. Even let me lift my courage to ask for grace to

learn that highest lesson, as the *Imitation* calls it,—love to be unknown and to be counted as nothing.

JUNE 3rd.

Silence of Jesus.

I.

“He opened not His mouth.”

Meditate on that long unbroken silence of the sacred humanity of Jesus in the tabernacle. He loves, He watches, He prays, but He speaks not. Is it not a solemn reproach to your unrestrained tongue, which perhaps is only silent when it should speak to Him?

Try, then, to offer to your silent Lord sentiments of confusion at the sight of your inconsiderateness, and ask of Him, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a gate of prudence before my lips, that my heart decline not into words of vanity.”

II.

"Be not Thou silent to me."

We may truly say of our dear Lord in the tabernacle, that "though silent, yet He speaketh." His voice can penetrate the very depths of the soul.

Do I strive to hear Him and to listen? Am I one of those whom He calls His sheep, who hear His voice and know Him?

III.

"Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Such is the prayer I would make when I go before my Lord. When I have poured out my soul before Him, told Him my temptations, my fears, and my sorrows, then let me listen to Him; and beseech Him to speak to me.

Never will He refuse that prayer; sooner or later He will answer me. He may keep me waiting, as He once did St. Magdalene and St. Martha, whom the Gospel tells us He loved; but at last

it shall be said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

"Let Thy voice sound in my ears; for Thy voice is sweet and Thy face comely."

JUNE 4th.

The Obedience of Jesus.

I.

"Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God."

Let me consider the wonderful obedience of Jesus in His sacrament. At any hour, at the call of His priests, He descends upon the altar, even though the hands that clasp Him be not worthy. He will enter into the breasts even of His enemies. He suffers Himself to be carried where we will, into the midst of misery, filth, and sin, even to be trodden under foot.

II.

"I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

This obedience is the fruit of real love, and if we really love, we too shall conquer ourselves, and obey for His sake.

Behold the explanation, then, of an obedience so constant and entire. Jesus is there in the Sacred Host, not for Himself, but for His Father's glory, and for us.

As on the cross He commended His soul into His Father's hands, so now He commends His body to our love, and abandons Himself to us.

Again, then, it is easy for the unselfish to obey; "but in whatsoever thing a man seeks himself, in that he falls away from love," says the *Imitation*.

III.

"I can do nothing of Myself."

These words, spoken by our Lord to teach the Jews His Godhead with the Father, we may apply in another sense to Him in His Sacrament. He can do nothing without us. If we do not go and adore Him, He remains alone and neglected. If we will not come to re-

ceive Him, He cannot feed us with the Bread of Life. It is there for me if I will only accept His love.

Then let me say to Him with all my soul,

“I have heard Thy loving call,
Draw closer still, I pray.”

JUNE 5th.

Our Lord in the Holy Viaticum.

I.

“Jesus, knowing that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father.”

Our Lord intends Holy Communion to be our mighty help when “our hour shall come” that is to see us pass out of this world.

You should be ever ready for that day, striving by worthy communions to know Him well with whom you will then be alone.

II.

“With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer.”

We too may desire the grace of receiving our Lord in viaticum before we pass through the agony of death.

Place your sweet Lord between you and all sorrows, all afflictions; make Him the barrier against sin entering your heart. Let the thought of your last hour prevent you from wasting a moment of time.

III.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.”

The Christians of the early ages used to carry with them the Blessed Sacrament, to have their viaticum ready at the moment of death.

Make each of your communions as if it were your viaticum. How do you know you may ever again receive your Lord on earth?

Let your life be spent with Jesus who is invisible, and then death shall lead you to Jesus whom you shall see.

JUNE 6th.**Our Duties towards the Blessed
Eucharist.****I.**

"I am the bread of life."

Examine yourself whether your reverence for the Blessed Sacrament is all it ought to be. If you often receive Holy Communion, why are you so feeble in the spiritual life?

Our Lord in the tabernacle ought to receive our profound adoration. He is humbled there for your sake. Do you try to make up a little for it by your loving homage?

II.

"After this, many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

The complete sacrifice of our reason, which we make in our adoration of our Lord in the Eucharist, is of great price before God.

Even while He taught this mystery with His own divine lips, some forsook Him, saying, "This is hard; who can hear it?"

Thank our Lord a thousand times for the gift of faith in the Blessed Sacrament.

III.

"Then Jesus - said to the twelve: Will you also go away?"

How touching was this appeal of our Lord to His apostles.

Is He not making it to you to-day? Is He not saying to you, Will you devote yourself to My honour in the Eucharist? will you die to self, and live in Me?

When the clouds of temptation and spiritual desolation cover your soul, will you go away from Jesus to creatures, or will you not rather say, with St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou, Thou only art my life on earth and in eternity"?

JUNE 7th.

**On the Reparation due to our Lord
in the Holy Eucharist.**

I.

“But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table.”

Our Lord knew well in giving the Divine Eucharist to men He was giving Himself to outrage and insult.

What must His suffering be when He is forced to enter an impure soul? How dearly He has loved us, loved you, that daily He exposes Himself to this anguish.

And will you not make reparation by fervent communions for so many unworthy ones?

II.

“But they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one: Is it I?”

Our Lord told the apostles of His grief, that they might comfort Him by their sorrow.

And you can give great consolation

to the Heart of Jesus by a sincere spirit of reparation. Give Him love for those who love Him not ; adoration for those who neglect Him ; and fervent, loving service for those who insult and injure Him.

III.

“ I am in the midst of you as He that serveth.”

Our Lord began the work of reparation. He offered Himself to His Father to atone for our sins, and He is ever offering Himself in the sacrifice of the altar for the same.

Join Him therefore in this work of reparation. When you are united to Him in communion, when He prays within you, and your voice is His, use the wonderful power you then possess at the throne of divine mercy. Plead then the cause of sinners, and offer God the Father YOUR TREASURE to repair for the crimes of men.

Take your poor weak heart to Jesus in the tabernacle, and let it abide there with Him.

JUNE 8th.

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

I.

"The Lord hath appeared from afar to me."

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

Truly were these words again fulfilled when our dear Lord deigned to appear to Blessed Margaret Mary, and say to her, "Behold this Heart, that hath loved men so much, and is so little loved in return."

Try to understand that cold indifference and forgetfulness of His love is the greatest pain we can give Him.

Believe in the love of Jesus, and you will very speedily increase in love for Him.

II.

"I have loved you, saith the Lord."

The essence of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is to understand the love of our Lord for us. If you do this,

most surely you will love Him in return.

But the effort of our enemy is to blind our eyes to this love, and to lead us to mistrust our Lord. Hence our souls are, as it were, stunted and dry. Our service of Him is cold and weary, when it ought to be one of joy and happiness.

III.

“I will joy in God my Jesus.”

Resolve from this time to give our Lord a noble service. Rejoice in the good fortune of having to serve such a Master. Serve Him out of love, not of constraint.

*“Dole not thy duties out to God,
But let thy hand be free.”*

Let every one see that you look on yourself as the happiest of beings, since you have been and are loved by the Heart of God, since God your Jesus is all yours.

Never hesitate at a sacrifice. Jesus will refuse nothing to those who love Him heart to heart. Place in that mer-

ciful Heart all your cares and sorrows,
and live but for Him and His interests.

“Heart of Jesus be my love.”

“Thy kingdom come.”

JUNE 9th.

The Sacred Heart.

I.

“Learn of Me, because I am meek
and humble of Heart.”

Our Lord was distinguished for His
meekness. He was the Lamb of God,
and by His meekness He has triumphed.

Are you meek of heart, patient under
slights, calm under trials, kind to those
who have injured you ?

If you deplore the contrary, ask grace
never to speak or act by impulse, and
above all, study the meek Heart of Jesus.

II.

“And you shall find rest to your
souls.”

During His whole life Jesus taught us humility, a virtue little known before He came. He seems to teach us that humility comprehends all other virtues.

The mark of true humility is easily to yield the will and judgment.

Ask our Lord to make you love humility. Ask from Him the great grace of contempt of your own self, and your own judgment, and the love of obscurity.

III.

“For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light.”

From the tabernacle Jesus teaches us a perpetual lesson of meekness and humility. Is He not more humbled there than even in His mortal life?

Self-contempt repairs the loss that your soul suffers by its daily faults.

Therefore before you draw near to Holy Communion, ask our Lord, “Who art Thou, who art about to give Thyself to me?” and then, “Who am I, for whose sake Thou dost deign so profoundly to humble Thyself?” And then

surely you can never desire to be exalted on earth, when only the lowly in heart can be His.

JUNE 10th.

The Well of Samaria.

I.

“Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour.”

Our dear Lord underwent that weariness of body that is so keen a trial to our human nature. He went through great fatigues and toil for our sakes, and He took but little sleep.

“There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give Me to drink.”

Happy do we esteem the woman from whom our Lord demanded this service.

He says these words to you: “I am thirsty, give ye Me to drink.”

Are you ministering to Him in His

little ones, saving their souls by your labours, example, prayers?

II.

“Then that Samaritan woman saith to Him: How dost Thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink?”

Are you not constantly resisting our Lord’s call to sacrifice? You are thinking: He cannot really want you to give up that, or to do this; I am not called to *that sort* of self-denial. And thus are you not among those who see Him thirsty, and give Him *not* to drink?

III.

“Jesus answered and said to her: If thou didst know the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou perhaps wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.”

Are not these words addressed to you? Do you really know the gift of God which is in the tabernacle? If so, would your prayers be so cold and poor?

Would you ask with so little faith, and mistrust your dear Lord as you do?

Fall at His feet, and say, "Teach me, O my Jesus, to know Thee and Thy divine tenderness of heart. Give to my poor soul the waters of eternal life, and make me Thine own for ever."

JUNE 11th.

The Living Water.

I.

"The woman saith to Him: Sir, Thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep. From whence, then, hast Thou living water?"

Does not this language resemble yours but too often? You cannot understand how our Lord can have His own way. He can never cure you of your faults, they are too deeply rooted. You can never change your ideas.

And yet you know, as this poor man did not, that He is all-powerful,

and that His strength is made perfect in weakness.

II.

“Jesus answered and said to her: Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall not thirst for ever. But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

The grace of your baptism, fed by the other sacraments, ought to be leading you on to closer union with our Lord, raising you above this earth, till your soul, springing forward, finds itself in the embrace of its God.

III.

“The woman saith to Him: Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw.”

You should end this meditation by making this prayer your own in its true sense. Ask so to feed on the heavenly teaching of our Lord as never to be

athirst for worldly consolations, never to be seeking from creatures that rest and peace that He alone can give.

“As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God. My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God.”

JUNE 12th.

Our Lord's Knowledge of the Heart.

I.

“The woman saith to Him: I perceive that Thou art a prophet.”

Our Lord had shown this poor woman that He knew the secrets of all hearts, that her life in this obscure city of Samaria was open to His divine eyes.

Do you ever delude yourself in thinking that God does not read the inmost recesses of your heart?

It is a real grace to be perfectly open with our Lord. If you tell Him all the meanness and baseness of your life, He

will cure you, and you will become humble.

II.

“The woman saith to Him: I know that the Messias cometh, who is called Christ; therefore when He is come He will tell us all things. Jesus saith to her: I am He who am speaking with thee.”

As our Lord was hidden from the eyes of this woman, even while speaking to Him, so is He hidden to you if the eyes of your soul are not earnestly seeking Him; if you do not see His will in that of superiors, His love in trials and disappointments, His needs in the poor and suffering.

Listen to Him as He says to you, “I am He who am speaking with thee.”

III.

“The woman went into the city, and saith: Come and see a Man who hath told me all things that ever I did. Is not He the Christ?”

If you desire real self-knowledge, seek

it at the feet of Jesus Christ. If you want the grace of true contrition, seek it, as Magdalene did, at those divine feet.

Let those grave and tender eyes gaze into your soul's depth, and while you see yourself and your miseries, which will abase your pride, you will also see that patient love which will give you hope and trust.

Cast yourself down before Him, and say,

*"Satest wearied, seeking me,
Let not vain Thy labour be."*

JUNE 13th.

Our Lord Preaches in Galilee.

I.

"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God."

His words were full of simplicity, grandeur, power, and sweetness, and He was the living model of the virtues He taught.

And thus it is you should teach the Gospel of Christ, by the wisdom and gentleness of your words, your patience with others, your perseverance in good works.

Hasten forward; perhaps your time on earth will soon be over.

II.

“And the fame of Him went out through the whole country.”

Thank our Lord for having devoted Himself so ardently to the preaching of the Gospel. Labour to do all in your power to spread the kingdom of Christ.

“Thy kingdom come.”

Let these words be ever on your lips, and the desire ever in your heart. Try to do your utmost, so that the fame of your dear Lord may increase more and more on earth.

III.

“And was extolled by all.”

And this is what ought to be the case in every land, in every place. He ought to be extolled above all in the Blessed

Sacrament, where He abides among men.

Be inflamed with a holy zeal to promote His greater glory in all your acts and words.

He is magnified in His saints. Nothing can give more honour to our Lord than the consistent holiness of His followers.

Give Him, then, this homage, and thereby you will draw many to magnify His name.

JUNE 14th.

Our Lord on the Lake of Genesareth.

I.

“And going up into one of the ships that was Simon’s, He desired him to draw back a little from the land. And sitting, He taught the multitudes out of the ship.”

Our Lord chose the ship of St. Peter, refiguring the chair of truth in which

that apostle and his successors should sit until time shall end.

The ship was put out from the shore, to signify that as long as we cling to earth our Lord's words will make no impression.

Cut the anchor, then, that binds your soul to creatures, that our Lord may possess you entirely.

II.

"Now when He had ceased to speak, He said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering, said to Him: Master, we have laboured all the night, and have taken nothing; but at Thy word I will let down the net."

It seemed hopeless to go on fishing, but St. Peter submitted his judgment and will to his Divine Master.

There are so many instances in the Gospel showing how our Lord loves blind obedience. He loves it as much now, when rendered to Him in the person of those who represent Him.

III.

"And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes; and their net was breaking."

Thus did our Lord bless obedience: and thus will He always bless it. Those who study and practice this great virtue can bear abundant witness; the obedient man shall speak of victory.

Look, then, constantly at the will of God. Cast your nets—make your plans as He wishes and desires, not according to your own ideas.

And by so doing you will conquer many faults, and acquire a multitude of virtues.

JUNE 15th.

Our Lord on the Lake of Genesareth.—

Continued.

I.

"And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they

should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking."

If you labour by yourself, without help from our Lord, without seeking His will in obedience, and without full confidence in Him, you will make no progress; but if you give yourself up to Him, He can work marvels of grace.

See what He has done with His saints, and adore His mighty power.

II.

"Which, when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

The graces of God only increase the humility of the saints.

The cry of your heart should indeed be, "Lord, I am a sinful being, unworthy of Thy divine presence, of Thy glorious gifts."

The more you humble yourself, the more our Lord will dwell with you.

III.

"And Jesus saith to Simon: Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

This is the reward of obedience; it enables us to do great things in our Master's service.

Do you yearn to gain souls? Be humble, distrust yourself, ponder often on your nothingness and your sins. Give yourself up in simple obedience to do God's will, and you shall "turn many to justice," even if you know it not. Say with St. Austin, "Lord, that I may know Thee, that I may know myself."

JUNE 16th.

**The driving out of the Money
Changers,**

I.

"And He found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting."

Such were the scandals that profaned the temple of Jerusalem; and this irreverence was so displeasing to our Lord that He acted in a way very unlike His usual quiet sweetness and gentleness with sinners.

And is there not often worse irreverence in our churches, places far more sacred than the temple? And have you nothing to reproach yourself with under this head? Are you always deeply reverent?

II.

“And when He had made, as it were, a scourge of little cords, He drove them all out of the temple; the sheep also, and the oxen; and the money of the changers He poured out, and the tables He overthrew.”

Thus we see how awful is the severity of Him who is so long-suffering with us, if we persist in dishonouring our God.

If we persist in indulging our passions, and keeping to our idols, we shall be driven out from the presence of our God.

Drive out, then, from your soul all jealousy, harsh judgments, envy, and bitterness, which prevent our Lord from reigning over you when He comes to His temple,—your soul.

III.

“And He said to them that sold doves: Take these things hence, and make not My Father’s house a house of traffic.”

Baptism has made you holy, the temples of the Holy Ghost, into which our Lord desires to enter often, feeding you with the Bread of Life.

Have a great respect for yourself, a horror of the defilement of sin. Let your heart be a sanctuary where Jesus may abide. Avoid, above all, the faults that most displease Him,—hardness and want of charity for others.

JUNE 17th.

The Ruler's Son.

I.

“And there was a certain ruler whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He, having heard that Jesus was come, went to Him, and prayed Him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.”

Do you take as much pains with your own soul, and the souls of those who are dear to you, as this man did for his son's health? Do you go to our Lord to tell Him your cares and sorrows about the salvation of others?

II.

“Jesus therefore said to him: Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not.”

Is He not saying these words to you to-day? If some extraordinary miracle is worked you are startled.

What miracle can ever exceed that of

the Blessed Sacrament, which is daily, hourly, before your eyes?

"Jesus saith to him: Go thy way, thy son liveth."

Leave your petitions at the feet of our Lord, and be sure that He will answer them, though it may not be exactly in the way you expect or wish.

III.

"The man believed the word which Jesus said unto him, and went his way."

So it should be with you. Your life would be a tranquil journey to the eternal shore, if you had faith, and if you "laid hold on" the promises that Jesus Christ has made you.

It is your doubts, your fears, your distrust, that keep back peace, light, and grace.

Beg your good Lord to increase your faith.

JUNE 18th.

The Ruler's Son.—Continued.

I.

“And as he was going down his servants met him, and they brought word, saying that his son lived.”

Never will our Lord fail in any of His promises.

He has told us He will answer prayer; therefore by prayer we shall obtain all that we need. If in ignorance we ask amiss, He will answer the prayer in His infinite wisdom in some way we shall know hereafter.

II.

“He asked, therefore, of them the hour wherein he grew better. And they said to him: Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him.”

See how all things obey their Creator. The sickness departed at His word.

Can you, then, occupy yourself with

vain doubts and fears, when we belong to such a Master, when you are the child of an omnipotent God?

Strive to increase your trust in Him till it is boundless.

III.

"The father knew therefore that it was at the same hour that Jesus said to him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house."

And thus the life of the soul was given by means of that of the body.

Our Lord allows us to see by His miracles how His loving providence watches over us.

You, therefore, who know the teaching of the Gospel, are bound to have such implicit faith in our Lord that nothing can disturb your peace.

You should live in happy assurance under His all-seeing eye.

JUNE 19th.

Our Lord casts out a devil,

I.

“And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying: What have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know who Thou art, the Holy One of God.”

Those who are given up to sin cannot bear to be in the immediate presence of God.

What hinders your union with Jesus Christ? Is it not self-seeking, an imperious will, an indocile spirit? Do you desire our Lord should cast these forth from your soul?

II.

“And Jesus threatened him, saying: Speak no more, and go out of the man.”

Ask your good Lord to silence in your soul your inclination to criticise

to speak ill of others, to murmur. Ask Him to send out of you self-love.

Pray also for others over whom you know the devil has great power.

III.

“And the unclean spirit, tearing him, and crying out with a loud voice, went out of him.”

The devils have to obey the voice of God.

Will *you* resist Him?

You desire our Lord should cast out your passions. Are you ready for the suffering, ready that they should be torn out from you, leaving behind a void and a wound, a void that only God can fill, a wound that only God can heal?

Be of good courage, and, lying at our Lord's feet, He will raise you up, and give you new life and new strength.

JUNE 20th.

The Cure of Simon's Wife's Mother.

I.

"They came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. And Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and forthwith they tell Him of her."

Surely they were blest indeed under whose lowly roof He entered, and who could tell their troubles to Him.

But He is ready to come to you, to listen to you.

Are you ready to receive the visit, and to tell your sorrow; or are you not taken up by seeking consolation from creatures?

II.

"And He came and lifted her up, taking her by the hand: He commanded the fever, and it left her."

So if you only will it earnestly, He will lift you up above your weak nature.

He will heal your spiritual diseases with the touch of His divine hand. He will command the temptation, and it will leave you. But you must be, as was this poor woman, prostrate before Him in utter abjection of soul. You must give up your will utterly to Him.

III.

“And immediately rising, she ministered to them.”

When our Lord has, in confession and Holy Communion, given you new life and strength, do you use them in His service? Do you immediately begin to carry out your resolution to make up for lost time?

With what loving diligence must this woman have waited on our Lord and His apostles.

Do you serve Him in a spirit of deep thanksgiving and gratitude? Strive to do so from henceforth.

JUNE 21st.

Our Lord Heals the Sick.

I.

“And when the sun was down, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them to Him. But He, laying His hands on every one of them, healed them.”

The house of Peter represents the Church of God.

The crowd of suppliants did not weary the compassionate Heart of Jesus. He is ready at any moment to hear our prayers. The sight of our miseries only moves Him the more. The Heart of Jesus is an inexhaustible treasure.

Do you draw much therefrom?

II.

“They brought to Him many that were possessed with devils, and He cast out the spirit with His word; and all that were sick He healed.”

Each one has his share. Not one was

missed. So does He speak to each of our souls in the sacrament of penance, laying His hands on us to break the bonds of sin.

And for bodily suffering He will heal you if it is good for you; if not, accept the suffering as a gift from His hand, as a salutary way of doing penance for sin.

The day when all shall be healed is at hand.

III.

“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaias, saying: He took our infirmities, and bore our diseases.”

All bodily disease is the mark of sin. In paradise there was no pain nor suffering; all came with sin.

And our Lord came to redeem us from sin, and therefore to release us from eternal suffering. He took them all on Him.

We have only to drink a few drops of His cup, to suffer a brief season, and then, if only we will correspond with His grace, we shall be in that eternity

where there shall be no more sorrow or mourning, neither shall there be any more pain.

JUNE 22nd.

Three who wish to Follow our Lord.

I.

“And a certain scribe came, and said to Him: Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt go.”

This man, we may suppose, received the grace of vocation to follow our Lord. At first he corresponded with it, and these eager words burst from him.

To how many souls is not this same grace given? They see the beauty of our Lord's example; they long to follow Him, and proclaim their intention; they form resolutions, but do they persevere?

II.

“And Jesus saith to him: The foxes

have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

Those who wish to follow the counsels of our Lord in religion must accept austere poverty, and from this the ungenerous soul shrinks back. All who would really follow Jesus Christ must have the spirit of poverty, and despise comforts.

How many, clinging to the good things that they can possess for so short a time, lose eternal bliss.

III.

"And another said: I will follow Thee, Lord; but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house."

This man was evidently more resolved than the other. He had reflected on the matter, he was ready to make a sacrifice; but it must be at his own time and in his own way.

The second counsel of our Lord followed in religion implies detachment, separation from earthly affections; and

all who follow Jesus Christ must make Him the first object of their love, must "keep themselves from idols."

JUNE 23rd.

Three who wish to Follow our Lord.—

Continued.

I.

"Jesus said to him: No man, putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Those who consecrate themselves to our Lord must not have a divided heart, must not be regretting the sacrifices they have made, otherwise they will never receive the hundred-fold He has promised.

And whoever, drawn by God's grace, resolves to serve Him better, and then takes back his word, will never gain the victory over self.

II.

"But he said to another: Follow Me. And he said: Lord, suffer me first to go and to bury my father."

Here was the positive call, requiring a simple and prompt obedience. The third counsel in religion is that obedience which makes the soul conform itself to the will of God in little things as in great, and none can really serve Jesus Christ who do not prefer His will to their own.

III.

"And Jesus said to him: Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

It would seem as if this third person obeyed the call, and won the grace.

Hear our Lord saying to you, "Let the dead bury their dead." Forget all that does not lead you to Jesus, who "quickeneth you" when you were dead in sin. Strive to bury out of your sight your evil inclinations, your spirit of resistance, and live a new life, "as chil-

dren of obedience, not conformed to the former desires of your ignorance."

Ask this grace from the Heart of Jesus.

JUNE 24th.

Our Lord Stills the Storm.

I.

"And behold, a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the ship was covered with waves; but He was asleep."

Our Lord's presence does not prevent the trials of life from coming upon us. Often you may be overwhelmed by them, and apparently He takes no heed.

He is, as it were asleep; but He is with us, we possess Him. Is it not enough?

II.

"And His disciples came to Him, and awaked Him, saying: Lord, save us, we perish."

This should be your way of acting

also. Your prayers in time of trouble should be so ardent, so earnest, so importunate, that you, if we may so speak, compel our Lord to listen. These are the prayers He loves. Most willingly will He come to your aid, and you will feel His power.

Make this immortal prayer your own, "Lord, save me." Without Thee, without Thy light and Thy grace I perish.

III.

"And Jesus saith to them: Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up, He commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm."

Nature obeys the will of its Creator. Shall we, His creatures, resist His will?

When the storm of temptation rages round you, when your nature strives hard for the mastery, throw yourself at His feet. If possible, receive Him in Holy Communion, and in His own good time, to you, as to all those who trust in Him, there shall come a great calm.

JUNE 25th.

**Our Lord's Miracle among the
Gerasens.**

I.

"There met Him a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling in the tombs, and no man now could bind him, not even with chains; for he had burst the chains, and no one could tame him. And he was always day and night crying, and cutting himself with stones."

What an awful picture of the ravages of sin, of the power of the evil one.

There is a perpetual restlessness in those given up to sin. They know their misery, and by fresh sins increase it.

Pray with all your strength to have a horror of sin.

II.

"And seeing Jesus afar off, he ran and adored Him; and crying with a loud voice, he said: What have I to do with

Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God ? I adjure Thee by God that Thou torment me not."

Those who are steeped in sin, despite of their misery, cling to it. They try to escape from Him who can heal them.

Do you like to see your faults, and to have them corrected ? Do you not often shrink back from the pain of self-knowledge, and prefer living in delusion ?

III.

"For He said to him : Go out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And He asked him : What is thy name ? And he saith to Him : Legion, for we are many."

Conceive an intense pity for those who are under the frightful tyranny of the devils. Pray for sinners, yea, be content to suffer for them.

Hold the devil and his crew in sovereign contempt. What are they before the Lord ? Wretched and grovelling things, full of terror at His power.

Close to Him, your life's Centre, there is nothing to fear.

JUNE 26th.

**Our Lord's Miracle among the
Gerasena.—Continued.**

I.

“ And the spirits besought Him, saying: Send us into the swine. And Jesus immediately gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd with great violence was carried headlong into the sea, being about two thousand, and were stifled in the sea.”

Our Lord permitted the devils to work this destruction to show men how they hate the human race, how they desire to bring their victims to an eternal death.

Do you consider enough what a bitter enemy you have in the devil? If so, would you not be more brave in the combat, more wary against the delusions by which too often he has blinded you?

II.

"And they came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils had departed, sitting at His feet, clothed, and of a sound mind."

What a wonderful contrast between the power of the devil and that of our Divine Lord! At *His* feet is rest, and peace, and light. The action of our enemy is to defile and destroy; that of our Lord to restore, to heal, to vivify.

In any hour of your life, in each trial and circumstance, remain at the feet of Jesus. No one can harm you there, and it is only when you listen to His divine teaching, and obey it, that you will have a right judgment in all things.

III.

"And they began to pray Him that He would depart from their coasts; for they were taken with fear."

Strange was this request, prompted probably by avarice. They feared lest the terrified demons should destroy any one of their flocks.

Do you ever lose the graces that our Lord desires to give you, by vain fears, foolish, obstinate scruples, and continual distrust of His goodness?

Many souls are stunted in the spiritual life, and become slaves to delusions.

Pray our dear Lord that this may not be your fate.

JUNE 27th.

After the Miracle.

I.

“And when He went up into the ship, he that had been troubled with the devil began to beseech Him that he might be with Him.”

This poor man desired to dwell in that divine presence, to hear constantly the tones of that wondrous voice which had put his fearful tyrants to flight.

Are you as eager to dwell with your Lord? Do you love the hours you are allowed to spend with Him? Do you

prefer to be an abject in the house of the Lord rather than in the tents of sinners, of this vain, passing world?

II.

“And He admitted him not, but saith to him: Go into the house to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had mercy on thee.”

Our Lord does not call all to the religious life, to the close service near to His divine person. Many desire that grace, but few obtain it.

Some He calls to leave all things and follow Him; others He bids, as He did this man, to do service for Him in the midst of the world, to proclaim His goodness, to glorify His name.

Are you in the place to which God has called you? Are you doing Him service therein?

III.

“And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things

Jesus had done for him : and all men wondered."

What a great work all, even the weakest, can do for God ! This man's words would have made little impression had not all seen the marvellous change wrought in him by our Lord.

And the preaching which never fails is that of sanctity. And there is no one, however weak, or young, or poor, or ignorant, who cannot publish the great things Jesus hath done by the holiness of his life.

Show forth, then, the fruit of the heavenly lessons, the wondrous graces you have received, and thus glorify your Lord.

JUNE 28th.

The Hem of our Lord's Garment.

I.

"He was thronged by the multitudes. And a woman, who was under an issue

of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing the better, but rather worse, came behind Him and touched the hem of His garment; and forthwith she felt in her body she was healed of the evil."

And are not we also apt to spend all that we have in trying to staunch the wounds of our souls with the consolations of earth? We go from creature to creature, and we only grow worse and worse. Then at last we creep to the feet of our Lord.

Many are thronging Him, the whole multitude of the Catholic Church; but we can always gain access to Him, and touch Him, and so we are healed.

II.

"And Jesus said: Who is it that touched Me? And all denying, Peter said: Master, the multitudes throng and press Thee, and dost Thou say, Who touched Me?"

Our Lord is in the midst of His creation and in the midst of His Church. Many know Him and come near to Him, but their hearts are far from Him. They do not touch His sacred body in a fervent communion. They come and they go without any grace obtained.

Are you not too often like these, knowing what our Lord can do, close to Him, and yet closing your heart against His light and grace?

III.

“And Jesus said: Somebody hath touched Me, for I know that virtue is gone out from Me.”

Will you not endeavour to have these words said of you? Let our Lord bear witness that you have touched Him in faith, in love, and devotion, and that virtue has gone into your soul. And then you will feel that temptation has no longer the same power over you, that the root of your spiritual maladies is destroyed.

Weakness and faults may remain, but

they are no longer separating you from our Lord. He is helping you to overcome them.

JUNE 29th.

The Hem of our Lord's Garment.—

Continued.

I.

“And He looked about to see her who had done this.”

You can never escape those all-seeing eyes. From Him you can never hide yourself; for those eyes, with that mild, grave gaze, will look into your soul.

Happy was this woman for whom the Lord was looking. She was a humble soul, deeming herself unworthy to approach nearer, content with the “hem of His garment,” the last and lowest place in His kingdom.

II.

“And the woman, seeing that she

was not hid, came trembling, and fell down before His feet, and told Him all the truth, and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was immediately healed."

Imitate her: go, trembling with the sense of your own nothingness and weakness, fall down before His feet, and *tell Him all the truth*. Tell Him of all your sins, the burden of the past, the struggles of the present. Tell Him truly what you were, save for His absolving grace, that has saved you from the eternal death that was close at hand, and bear most willingly any shame, any humiliation before men, which He wills you should undergo.

III.

"But He said to her: Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Behold the reward of faith, humility, and obedience. Jesus called her His child, and blessed her soul with that

blessing which we may feel sure won for her eternal life. Her way in life was in peace, till at last her abode was in peace in holy Sion. Tradition numbers her among the saints.

And whenever you deserve it, our Lord will say to you, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." With faith in the absolving power left in His Church, the humble telling all the truth shall cleanse your soul, and you can go your way in peace till this short life shall end.

JUNE 30th.

The Vocation of St. Matthew.

I.

"He went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the custom-house, and He said to him: Follow Me. And leaving all things, he rose up and followed Him."

A publican was a tax gatherer, an office detested and despised by the Jews.

But our Lord despises no one, and He called one of this class so looked down upon to be an apostle and evangelist.

Levi, or Matthew, had a generous soul; he made neither demur, nor condition, nor delay, but instantly "left all," and obeyed the call.

Thus does our Lord delight to be served, without bargaining for one's own happiness or health. He likes us to give Him all without reserve.

II.

"And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house; and behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples. But the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying to the disciples: Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"

When you are hard on others, and when you despise others, you act the part of the Pharisees. If you would be like our Lord, be most merciful to

sinner. Try to draw them near to our Lord. Do all you can that they should come and sit down at a great feast, the banquet of the Eucharist.

Teach them how our Lord has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will not cast out."

III.

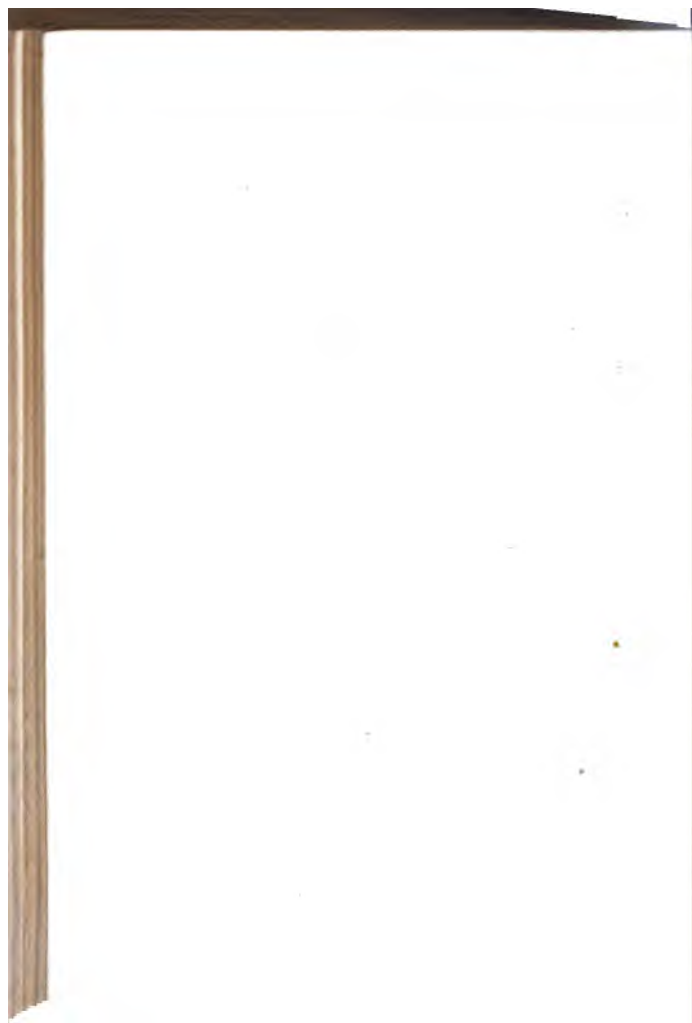
"But Jesus hearing it, saith: They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are sick. Go, then, and learn what this means: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the just, but sinners."

Therein lies, then, your great consolation and support.

You are spiritually sick, and our Lord is ready to heal you. You feel the weight of your sins; our Lord has come to call you from them.

If you were not in need of Him He would pass you by, and the only thing that can hinder Him from helping you is pride, which blinds you to your misery, and allows you to deem yourself *just*.

Fall down before our Lord, and say,
"Heal my soul, for I have sinned
against Thee. O Lord, be Thou merci-
ful to me."



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